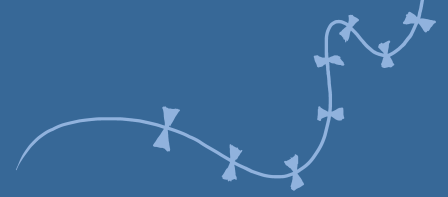
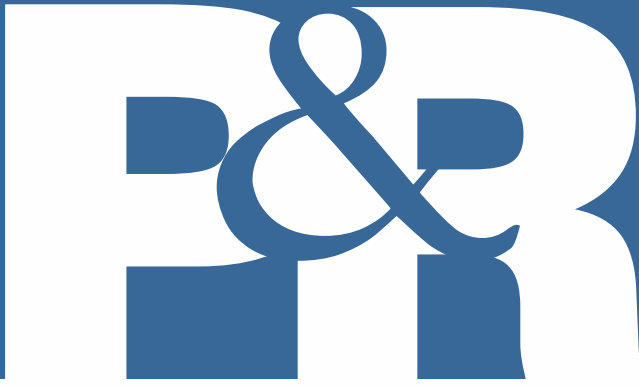


illinois

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PARKS AND RECREATION

The magazine of the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association



golf trends

PLUS: Soaring to New Heights Conference Award Winners
& Give Us Your Best Shot Photo Contest Winners



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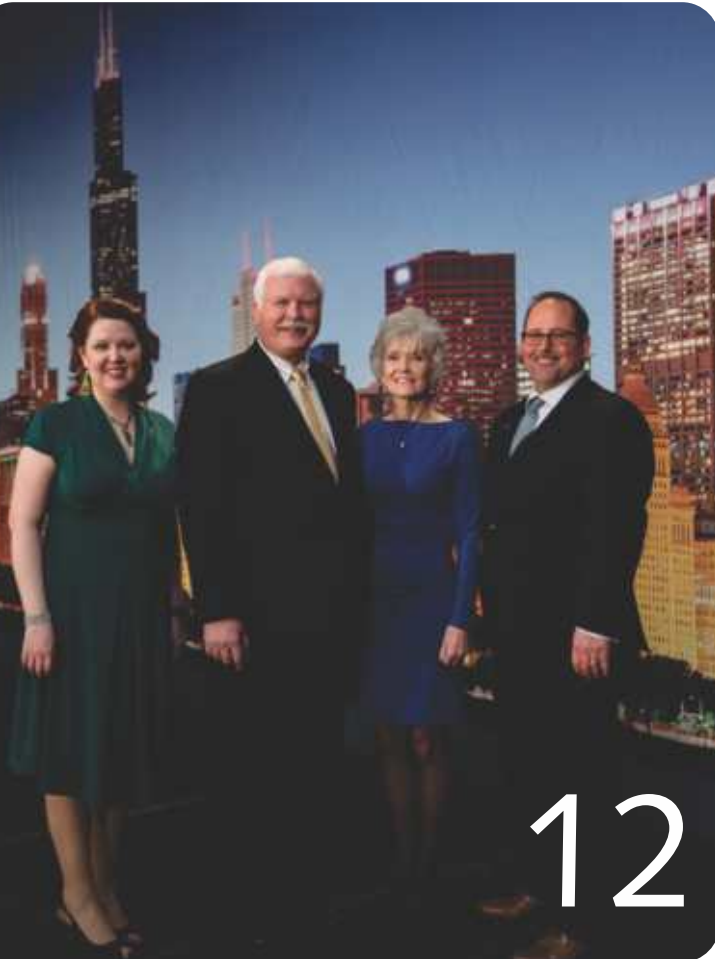


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FROM THE EDITOR



There are several reasons you will want to swing into this issue of IP&R magazine! It is full of great stories on golf trends and it also contains coverage from the 2016 IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. In addition, you will find the winners from the 2015 Give Us Your Best Shot photo contest and an all-star filled people and places section.

Golf is a wonderful, timeless game that allows you to relax, enjoy the outdoors and bond with family and friends. I have some fond memories of my father teaching me to play golf when I was younger. He was very patient with me and showed me the basics while teaching me golf etiquette at the same time. Even though I am left handed, I learned to play right handed because those were the clubs I had available to me while I was learning. In the later years, I tried golfing left handed before I purchased my own set of clubs and it seemed backwards to me so I stuck with the right handed clubs.

You can start your own family tradition by playing 9 or 18 holes at your local park district course or taking advantage of some of the new versions of golf. There are some exciting new trends in golf these days from re-designed courses to foot golf to golf simulators. Whichever form of golf you choose, you are sure to have a good time!

In order to find the best park district golf course to play this season, we are once again putting together the comprehensive IAPD Illinois Golf Guide chalked full of information about all the park district golf courses across the state of Illinois. There is no charge for this publication, it is just one of the benefits of IAPD membership.

Enjoy your spring and don't forget to get out and hit your local park district golf course!

— Rachel Laier, Editor



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Peter M. Murphy, J.D., CAE
IAPD President and CEO

Call to Service: Opportunities for Involvement in IAPD's Mission

The Annual IAPD/IPRA Conference at the end of January came to a successful finish with a wonderful networking event. The conference included more than 189 programs packed with high quality educational content and this year's keynote speaker, Lowell Catlett, gave a powerful presentation that challenged those in attendance to look at the services they provide in new ways that help serve the entire community.

I have heard from many of you that this was the best conference that we have conducted to date and I couldn't agree more. It was certainly an opportunity for all of us to recharge our enthusiasm and commitment to providing the highest quality of parks, recreation and conservation to the citizens of our communities and the State of Illinois.

I want to especially thank the Conference Committee for the tremendous commitment they make to the conference throughout the year. It simply would not be as successful without the involvement of conference chairs, Mike Vogl and Matt Barber; program chairs, Lili Kilbridge and Tom Hartwig; event chairs, Tom Barz and Mike Kies; operations chairs, Jerri-Lynn Kleina and John Robinson; operations co-chairs, Kevin Dolan and Kevin Romejko; exhibits chairs, Greg Kolinek and John Wilson; and exhibits co-chairs, Eric Entler and John Curran.

Leadership

The IAPD Leadership Institute this year features a robust combination of workshops and webinars from June through September. Watch for details to follow on each portion of the program. This year's featured speaker will be leadership expert David Carter.

Call to Service

The IAPD is always seeking the interest and involvement of locally elected board members to serve on its committees. Below is an abbreviated listing of committee responsibilities.

- **Ambassadors Committee:** Provides outreach to member agencies on the association's programs, benefits and affinity partnerships. Presents awards, recognitions and membership information at local agency board meetings.
- **Honors and Resolutions Committee:** Plans and coordinates the presentation of the IAPD annual awards program, recognizing individuals and agencies for their outstanding local, state and national contributions to the field. Committee members attend one to two meetings per year, as needed. Committee members also meet telephonically and review electronic award submissions.
- **Membership Committee:** Promotes IAPD membership to park, forest preserve and conservation districts, city and village parks and recreation boards, departments of the State of Illinois,

colleges and universities, commercial businesses and all others interested in and concerned with parks, recreation and natural resources. The committee meets quarterly.

- **Program Committee:** Responsible for educating the membership via workshops and educational sessions throughout the year and at the state conference. Committee members assist in planning, organizing, chairing, staffing and promoting these educational offerings. The committee meets three times annually – March/April, July and December.
- **Research Advisory Council:** Determines and implements research needed to ensure the long-term success of the legislative advocacy and public relations programs of the association and addresses the collective research needs of member districts. The committee meets on an as-needed basis – typically three times a year.
- **Municipal Committee:** Promotes special programs and provides educational materials to assist municipal park and recreation departments. Networking opportunities are provided to assist in addressing the unique challenges these agencies face. The committee meets in conjunction with the state conference and periodically during the year.

We also seek members for joint committees in advance of the calendar year. See the next issue of *IP&R* magazine for more information on these committees.

If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact me at the IAPD offices at pmurphy@ilparks.org. For a full description of committee responsibilities, please see the IAPD website at www.ilparks.org. If the membership on a committee is at capacity, your name will be placed on a list for appointment in the coming year.

IPRA Executive Director, Debbie Trueblood, references in her article this month the pace of retirements taking place at the director level at park districts. While this is not a new phenomenon, it is certainly a cyclical one. *People & Places* highlights retiring park professionals and I commend it to your attention as you read the magazine on a bimonthly basis. This month highlights three pioneers in the park and recreation profession that are retiring – John Wilson, Bill Nelson and Bonnie Noble. Their contributions to the field have truly been immeasurable and their leadership, dedication and commitment will truly be missed. (See complete information on pages 32 & 33.)

With the new year also comes the election of new officers and board members for the IAPD. Our incoming chairman, Ken Collin, is from the Freeport Park District and his biographical information can be seen on page 15. The following three board members were most recently elected at the association's annual meeting:



LESTER LONG, Trustee
Agency: Dolton Park District

Lester Long has been a prominent individual in the Village of Dolton since 1985, serving as president of the Homeowners' Association, a PTA board member for School District 148 and a youth sports coach. His volunteer spirit includes serving Thanksgiving and Christmas meals to the community's senior citizens.

Lester has been a commissioner of the Dolton Park District since 1997, serving as board president for 14 of the 18 years. During his tenure, he has worked with the park district board to support and obtain \$10.6 million in grants to improve all parks and facilities.

Lester and his fellow commissioners recently completed the construction of a new community early learning center that will qualify as a LEED Gold Early Childcare Facility. In 2016, the Dolton Park District will complete the eastern corridor of Cal-Sag Trail, a 26.5 mile federally-funded bike and walk trail. Lester serves on the Program and Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation committees.



LORI PALMER, Trustee
Agency: Bartlett Park District

Lori Palmer has been a commissioner of the Bartlett Park District since 1997 serving as president, vice president and treasurer. She is active in her community, giving back as a Girl Scout leader, a soccer coach and a religious education teacher as well as being involved with the Women's Golf League.

Lori served as a member of the park district's strategic planning team and People for Parks—a community group that rallied for the purchase of 38 acres which now serves as the site of the park district's community center. Lori actively volunteers at park district events on a regular basis.

She has served on the National Recreation and Park Association's National Forum and on the National Awards committee. She was involved in negotiating an agreement with the State of Illinois, the DuPage County Forest Preserve District and the Bartlett Park District for the use of space at James "Pate" Philip State Park. She serves on the Program and Joint Legislative committees.



DICK VOLKER, Trustee
Agency: Princeton Park District

Dick has been a commissioner of the Princeton Park District since 2005 and has served as board secretary and vice-president for the past five years. He actively supports the mission of the park district and has served on the Policy & Ordinances committee and the FOIA & Open Meetings Act committee. He and his fellow board members helped guide the 40-acre expansion of Zearing Park, a \$1.8 million project.

Dick worked in sales management with the Coca-Cola Company for more than 40 years, after which he became a health insurance agent specializing in assisting senior citizens with their Medicare needs.

Dick has always been interested in sports and served as an Illinois High School Association baseball umpire for 37 years (working three IHSA state finals) and a basketball official for 25 years. Dick serves on the Membership, Program and Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation committees.

2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April-May
Flying for Kids Month
Statewide Kite Fly

May 3
Parks Day at the Capitol
Illinois State Capitol

May 3
Legislative Reception
Illini Country Club

May 4
Legislative Conference
Crowne Plaza, Springfield

May 9
IAPD Summer Golf Tour #1

Schaumburg Park District's Schaumburg Golf Club

May 12
IAPD Leadership InSTITUTE
Redefining Leadership Workshop
6:00pm – 9:00pm
Downers Grove Park District's Recreation and Fitness Center

June 6
IAPD Summer Golf Tour #2
Cary Park District/GolfVisions Management, Inc.'s Foxford Hills Golf Club

June 16
IAPD Leadership InSTITUTE
Everyone Communicates – Few Connect Webinar

July 14
IAPD Leadership Classic
Bensenville Park District's White Pines Golf Club

July 21
IAPD Leadership InSTITUTE
Transformational Leadership Webinar

August 15
IAPD Summer Golf Tour #3
Byron Forest Preserve District's Prairie View Golf Club

August 18
IAPD Leadership InSTITUTE
Leading Community Engagement Webinar

August 20
Park District Conservation Day
IL State Fairgrounds, Springfield

September 19
IAPD Summer Golf Tour #4
Park District of Highland Park's Highland Park Country Club

September 22
IAPD Leadership InSTITUTE
Leading Through Turbulent Times
6:00pm – 9:00pm
Downers Grove Park District's Recreation and Fitness Center

October 6-8
NRPA Congress
St. Louis, MO

October 21
IAPD Awards Gala
Best of the Best Awards Gala
Wheeling Park District's, Chevy Chase Country Club

November 3
IAPD Legal Symposium
McDonald's University/Hyatt Lodge

January 19-21, 2017
IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference
Hilton Chicago



For the most up-to-date Calendar of Events, please visit the IAPD website at www.ilparks.org.



By Debbie Trueblood, CAE
IPRA Executive Director

A Recent Wave of Retirements Creates New Opportunities for Professionals

As we reflect on the recent Soaring to New Heights Conference, there are many exciting and innovative changes happening in the industry. At the same time, one trend that feels a little more bittersweet is the growing trend of longtime professionals and leaders moving onto the next chapter of their lives into retirement. We've known there was going to be a large group of our members retiring over the course of just a few short years, and we have planned for that change in our industry since 2011 when IPRA developed the Leadership Academy program to develop the future leaders who we believed would grow into those positions. The forecasting was correct and in the last year alone, it seems so many are seeing the magnetic glow of an early retirement option and moving on to a life of full time recreation, or second careers in their other passions. To those people who are moving on, we couldn't possibly have enough awards to cover all of you who are deserving at the pinnacle of your careers. But, know that we honor you with our thoughts, that you and your careers have inspired us, and that each of you in your own way have left a lasting impression on our professional community and that parks and recreation in Illinois is better today than when you found it. We hope that you will continue to stay involved with us.

To those of you who, like me, are far from a life of retirement, the bright side in this transition is that the combination of these jobs opening up from retirement as well as new jobs being formed, opportunities are abound right now! Our IPRA job board has actually doubled in size in just two years alone. This is your chance, this is your moment- I'm not suggesting for a moment that you need to leave your agency home, but consider applying for a promotion. Take a look at your career path and identify where you want to be next. And whether you identify that you need to pursue some additional education first to make you a more viable candidate, or whether you are offered the opportunity and need to go back for a brush up on skills or talk to a mentor about some of your new duties, IPRA can help you. Again, we've known this change was coming and we have been busy for five years building our educational programs at every level of professional experience to be ready for your needs now, your opportunities, and your career plans. Allow me to review some of our educational offerings in addition to the annual Soaring to New Heights Conference.

Leadership Academy is our premier program. This program is in partnership with the University of Illinois and our partnership won a national award in 2014. The program is designed for all levels of professionals to pursue leadership training in one of three levels:

- Personal Level: Participants will learn skills such as networking and decision making to help grow as a leader.

- Team Level: The focus will be on developing teams and maximizing results.
- Agency Level: An intense focus on developing a positive work culture where excellence is the norm.

One testimonial notes, "My Leadership Academy experience not only connected me to some great speakers that helped me think out of the box or look at new ways to enhance our profession, but brought me networking opportunities that I still cherish today. It has offered me the opportunity to serve on the Board of Regents with professionals I now consider to be friends and provided me with the tools to obtain a new position as an executive director. In our profession, I see a lot of passion and the Leadership Academy has allowed me the opportunity to share that passion with the future leaders of the great field of parks and recreation. Leadership Academy is about building future leaders and providing them with the resources to be successful and I am proud to be a part of that growth and excitement." - Jim R., Agency Level

"Take a look at your career path and identify where you want to be next... IPRA can help you."



Leadership Academy includes training one day a month for six months with a graduation at the end. U of I provides a certificate of completion for graduates at each level of the program.

ProConnect: This is our mentoring program, which won a national award for innovation in 2015, and is done in partnership with the University of St Francis. We have two programs: ProConnect in the Chicago area and ProConnect South in Southern Illinois in partnership with the Southern Illinois Park and Recreation Association (SIPRA). In this program, early career, mid-level, and seasoned professionals are matched in a three-person mentoring team. The team meets five times over six months for education, two team building events, a service project, and culmination luncheon. Education is provided as the core purpose of one event, but worked in with "hot topics" at the beginning of most events. A group of ten people, called an "Accountability Team"

help the teams stay on track towards meeting their mentoring goals throughout the program.

Professional Development School (PDS): This is an annual program, like a mini-conference for three days. Attendees take level 1 the first year, level 2 the second year and graduate, after that. Graduates from any year can come back for the “graduate” level course, which changes every year. This program incorporates team building and networking and while it includes professionals of all levels, is especially popular with early and mid-level professionals. We do away with work titles for the week and find we can all learn from each other. PDS is in October in Galena. The keynote speaker is always a big hit!

Supervisor Symposium: This is a two day mini-conference, recently moved to April instead of September, held in Elk Grove. This event is uniquely for early career professionals or those just coming into a professional position in parks and recreation. Students are also encouraged to attend.

Therapeutic Recreation Leadership Summit (TR Summit): This one day event held in September in Bartlett is just for people in therapeutic recreation, to focus on specialized skills for all levels of professionals.

Park Pursuit: This is a networking event for park and recreation professionals in the style of the TV show, “Amazing Race” with a team-based scavenger hunt/physical race. This is one of our more popular events with as many as 250 attendees annually. It's a great way to network with other professionals in a fun, challenging environment.

Webinar Series: This is an annual subscription that your agency can purchase and share among the staff. We have heard that agencies may show the webinar in a conference room as an “in service” training or that SRAs may invite their supporting agencies to participate with them. You pay for the subscription for eleven months of webinars. Each month the same webinar is performed “live” twice to allow attendees to interact with the speaker on two occasions, then they are recorded, so if you miss a month, you can listen to it another time instead. The webinar series is so popular that IPRA has members all over the country who participate in this program.

Section Educational Events: Finally, IPRA has seven sections- Administration & Finance, Communications & Marketing, Diversity, Facility Management, Park & Natural Resource Management, Recreation, and Therapeutic Recreation all of whom present in person educational events throughout the year for free as part of your membership experience. This allows members to get very detailed education on niche subject matters within the field.

As you pursue professional development opportunities and work your way up to that next big career opportunity, follow the IPRA job board to find out what different kinds of positions might require in terms of skillsets and make your path from there. No matter your career needs, IPRA is working to develop programming for you. And for our recent retirees, when you're looking to keep a toe in the water, so to speak, consider coming back as a mentor with ProConnect and helping the next generation. In our professional community, there is a home and a role for everyone to learn from each other.

Upcoming Events

April 8, 2016
Supervisor Symposium

April 13 & 21, 2016
Skills Development Webinar Series - April: WHAT DO THE REARVIEW MIRROR AND CRYSTAL BALL TELL US?

April 19-21, 2016
Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course (CPSI)

April 21, 2016
2016 "GIS IN THE PARKS"
Level 2/Session 1

May 5, 2016
10th Annual Park Pursuit

May 11 & 19, 2016
Skills Development Webinar Series - May: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR AGENCY WHY AND HOW



For details and registration, please visit the IPRA event calendar at Illpra.org

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Photo by Arlington Heights Park District staff



Jason Anselment
Legal/Legislative Counsel

Thousands of New Bills Introduced as State Budget Impasse Continues

While the ongoing budget stalemate continues to garner most of the media attention, there will be plenty of other legislative activity to follow at the Capitol during the Spring Session. In fact, legislators have introduced nearly 3,300 new bills since the beginning of the year. When added to the number of bills that were filed last year, there are now nearly 10,000 total bills to monitor in the 99th General Assembly.

While it is still too early in the legislative process to know which proposals will move forward this spring, the legislation below provides a sampling of bills that IAPD will closely track because of the potential impact on park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts, and recreation and special recreation agencies.

As always, as the legislative session progresses members can count on IAPD to keep you apprised of the latest developments from the Capitol through Legislative Updates and Alerts. Of course, members always have 24-hour access to the status of bills we are tracking through the Public Policy section of the IAPD website (www.ILparks.org).

IAPD Platform Bill Reintroduced

Three of IAPD's four platform bills for the 99th General Assembly were signed into law last year as **HB 1363 / Public Act 99-0271 (Fine, L. / Holmes, L.)**, **HB 405 / Public Act 99-0053 (Sandack, R. / LaHood, D.)** and **HB 3882 / Public Act 99-0016 (Moffitt, D. / Jones, E., III)**.

The remaining platform measure, which would raise the bid limit threshold under the Park District Code, Downstate Forest Preserve District Act and the Conservation District Act from \$20,000 to \$25,000, has been reintroduced as **HB 4536 (Walsh, L., Jr.) / SB 2772 (Hastings, M.)**. This legislation is identical to **SB 1271 (McGuire, P. / Walsh, L., Jr.)**, which passed both chambers last year with bipartisan support, but was one of 64 bills that were vetoed. This modest but important change would help IAPD member agencies and their taxpayers save administrative costs on small purchases by allowing them to exercise local control and use their own policies and procedures.

Other Local Government Procurement Practices

SB 2270 (Stadelman, S.) would require local government contracts with auditors to be competitively bid. The bill would also prohibit local governments from contracting with auditors or auditing firms who have performed audits for the unit of local government in the previous 5 fiscal years unless the auditing firm practices "audit partner rotation" as defined in the legislation.

HB 4379 (McSweeney, D.) creates the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act and would require school districts and non-home rule units of local government to regulate travel, meal, and lodging expenses for officers and employees by establishing: (1) the types of official business for which such expenses are allowable; (2) the maximum reimbursable amount for such expenses; and (3) a

standardized reimbursement expense form. Travel, meal, and lodging expenses could only be approved after submission of specified documentation and approval by a roll call vote at a board meeting. Entertainment expenses could not be reimbursed unless the expense is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

HB 5595 (McDermid, M.) would increase the exemption for architectural, engineering and land surveying contracts from \$25,000 to \$150,000 under the Local Government Professional Services Selection Act.

Open Meetings Act

The following are new proposals to amend the Open Meetings Act.

HB 4664 (McDermid, M.) proposes to disqualify from office any elected or appointed member of a public body who fails to complete his or her required Open Meetings Act training within 30 days of receiving notice from the public body that he or she has failed to complete the statutorily-required training.

HB 5522 (Ives, J.) would require units of local government with an annual budget of \$1 million or more to maintain an Internet website with information such as meeting materials, procedures for requesting information, the annual budget, operation ordinances, permit application procedures, financial reports and audits, employee compensation, contracts with lobbying firms, taxes and fees imposed, rules governing the award of contracts, bids and contracts worth \$25,000 or more, debt disclosure reports and all public notices. All of these records would be required to be kept online for 10 years. Each local government would be required to create and maintain searchable expenditure and revenue information in a format the local government would otherwise utilize for its own purposes.

HB 5683 (Breen, P.) would allow a person to file a lawsuit in circuit court within 60 days of a non-binding decision by the Attorney General to resolve a request for review.

HB 6147 (Kay, D.) proposes to: 1) expressly prohibit a public body from refusing to allow any of its members to attend any open or closed meeting of the public body; (2) require (rather than permit) a court to assess attorney's fees and other litigation costs that are reasonably incurred by a party who substantially prevails in any action for non-compliance with the Open Meetings Act; and (3) require the Attorney General to issue an opinion within 20 (rather than 60) days after initiating a review.

FOIA / Local Records

The following bills amend the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Local Records Act.

HB 6083 (Bryant, T.) would raise the maximum penalty under FOIA from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and would require a court to impose an additional \$1,000 penalty for each day a violation continues commencing 30 days after a court order.

HB 4383 (Kay, D.) would expand the term "news media" under FOIA to include any individual or entity that publishes content for public viewing, regardless of whether the individual or entity earns any income. It would also require any public body responding to a categorical FOIA request to attach a verified statement containing the policies and protocol utilized for any search of electronically stored information, including, but not limited to, exact words, spaces, numerals, capitalization, and all filters used in the search. The bill also proposes other changes relating to the judicial process under FOIA.

HB 6098 (Demmer, T.) / SB 3181 (Duffy, D.) would require the Illinois Transparency and Accountability Portal webmaster to compile and update notices and digital public records from all school districts and units of local government (currently limited to counties, townships, municipalities and library districts) and would amend the Local Records Act to provide that a school district or unit of local government may publish any notice, agenda, record, or other information or material required by law electronically instead of in a newspaper. The bill would also allow a unit of local government to satisfy any requirement to store or maintain any public record in microfilm or microfiche by maintaining the record in any digital form.

Minimum Wage

SB 2145 (Lightford, K.) is a reintroduction of SB 11, which passed the Senate last year but not the House, and would increase the minimum wage from \$8.25 to \$9.00 beginning July 1, 2016 and increase it by \$0.50 each July 1 until July 1, 2020, at which point the minimum wage would be \$11.00.

SB 2552 (Oberweis, J.) would increase the minimum wage for workers who are 26 years of age or older to \$9 per hour in 2017, \$9.50 per hour in 2018, and \$10 per hour in 2019.

Elections

SB 2254 (Harris, N., III) would amend the Election Code to allow for the recall of local elected officials.

HB 5630 (Wheeler, K.) impacts special districts with appointed board members by requiring those members to be elected if the district has taxing authority.

Local Government Consolidation & Unfunded Mandates

A number of bills have been introduced in response to recommendations by the Lt. Governor's Local Government Consolidation and Unfunded Mandates Task Force.

Many of the consolidation proposals specifically impact school districts and townships, but two proposals are much broader.

HB 4967 (McSweeney, D.) / SB 2464 (Righter, D.) would allow 5% of electors casting votes in the preceding general election to initiate a referendum to dissolve any unit of local government by combining it with any other unit of government. The unit of local government would be dissolved if the referendum was approved by either (1) a majority of those voting in the election, or (2) three-fifths of those voting on the specific question. Such approval would be required by voters of both the "dissolving unit of local government" and the "receiving unit of local government."

HB 4979 (Franks, J.) / SB 2463 (Righter, D.) / HB 4501 (Yingling, S.) would extend the pilot program that was approved for DuPage County a few years ago to allow all 102 county boards statewide to dissolve units of local government whose board members are appointed by the county.

The next two proposals related to unfunded mandate relief were also recommendations by the Lt. Governor's Task Force.

HB 6092 (Sosnowski, J.) would allow a governmental unit to satisfy newspaper publication requirements by instead posting any required notice on an official government website.

HB 6094 (Demmer, T.) / SB 3182 (Righter, D.) would create the Local Unfunded Mandate Exemption Act to allow all units of local government, school districts, and public colleges and universities, by a majority vote of the governing body, to exempt themselves from specified mandates that are unfunded if it is determined that it is not economically feasible to comply with the unfunded mandate.

Park District Volunteers

HB 5908 (Andrade, J.) would amend the Park District Code to require volunteers to complete an application prior to beginning work as a volunteer including disclosing whether they have been convicted of or found to be a perpetrator of a sex offense. The legislation would also require a current volunteer who is convicted of or found to be the perpetrator of a sex offense to immediately disclose the conviction or finding to the park district and resign and provide penalties for a volunteer who fails to disclose his or her sex offender status. The proposed requirements are limited to volunteers who serve without compensation or benefits and who report to, and are under the direct supervision of, a park district's administrative staff and who provide personal services to a park district recreational program that is offered to children.

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IAPD and IPRA honored legislators and leaders in the park, recreation and conservation industry at the Soaring to New Heights awards luncheon on Friday, January 29th at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.



2016

IAPD/IPRA

SOARING^{to} NEW HEIGHTS

CONFERENCE AWARDS



IAPD Legislator of the Year – Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno

For nearly 20 years, Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno has been a dedicated and reliable supporter of IAPD and its member agencies. Time and time again we have counted on her leadership and support in helping to pass IAPD platform initiatives. She has always been a leader in the fight against unfunded mandates and is a strong proponent of local government. Leader

Radogno is a staunch advocate for grant funding for park districts and recreation agencies. She has also worked to protect dedicated funding for the OSLAD and PARC grant programs. Leader Radogno's steadfast support of Illinois park and recreation agencies has been tremendous.



IAPD Legislator of the Year – Representative Bob Pritchard

Throughout his career, Representative Bob Pritchard has been an advocate for park, recreation and conservation issues both on the front lines and behind the scenes. As one of the legislature's leading voices on education, Representative Pritchard understands the important role that the park districts play in supporting childhood development, mental and physical health and wellness. He also recognizes

the many partnerships and intergovernmental agreements that park districts have formed with schools to help save tax dollars by sharing facilities and other services. Representative Pritchard has always been a dedicated supporter of IAPD and attends nearly all of our legislative events. Representative Pritchard's devotion has been remarkable.

IAPD Legislator of the Year – Representative Carol Sente



Before joining the Illinois House of Representatives in 2009, Representative Carol Sente served as a commissioner for the Vernon Hills Park District. Fortunately, she brought all of her expertise to the General Assembly and helped advance our causes. Representative Sente understands the importance of programs like OSLAD and knows that park districts and recreation agencies provide critical services to local communities. When IAPD negotiated legislation related to movable soccer goals and concussions, she

recognized that park districts can be trusted to provide a safe environment without the need for costly unfunded mandates. Representative Sente's dedication to IAPD and park and recreation agencies has been outstanding.



IAPD Legislator of the Year – Senator Tom Cullerton

Since joining the Senate in 2013, Senator Tom Cullerton has been one of IAPD's strongest allies. As a member of the Senate Local Government Committee, he has been a consistent and reliable voice on issues that affect IAPD member agencies. Senator Cullerton has sponsored two IAPD platform initiatives. Because of his tireless efforts, HB 4483 allows newly-elected commissioners the ability to

satisfy Open Meetings Act training requirements by attending IAPD educational programs. SB 1410 allows park districts the ability to adopt a supplemental appropriation ordinance, which has saved both time and money. Senator Cullerton's advocacy efforts and dedication have been amazing.

IPRA Young Professional of the Year – Jason Posluszny, Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

This year's winner of the IPRA Young Professional of the Year award was Jason Posluszny from the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA). Prior to his appointment as the operations manager at FVSRA, Jason was part of the Bloomingdale Park District team. At Fox Valley, Jason works with staff, participants, families and community members to schedule facilities, oversee transportation services and assist with a variety of programs and fundraisers. He has utilized his energy and passion in creating new ways of collecting data to measure transportation services to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the program. Jason's drive and passion make him a great IPRA Young Professional.



IAPD Rising Star – Kevin Riley, Batavia Park District

The IAPD Rising Star award was presented to Kevin Riley from the Batavia Park District. Kevin was elected to the board in 2011 and his enthusiasm for the park district was immediately evident. Kevin exudes an air of genuine thoughtfulness and interest in the district. He is truly committed to making his community a great place to work and play. Kevin serves on the Project Play Initiative to help children. He is also a mentor and a role model to participants and staff at the park district. His deep involvement in the Batavia Park District and commitment to his community make Kevin an excellent IAPD Rising Star.



IPRA Advocacy – News-Gazette

Nominated by the Champaign Park District, the News-Gazette is the winner of the IPRA Advocacy award. The News-Gazette is a long-standing partner with the park district. The News-Gazette provides crucial financial in-kind support including printing and insertion, matching advertising, sponsorships and coverage of key events. The News-Gazette also brings recognition to programs and festivals and builds awareness for issues such as childhood obesity, arts education, environmental management and fitness. The News-Gazette asks insightful questions, creates thoughtful pieces and brings balance to issues that impact the district. Because of their willingness to reach out to the community, the News-Gazette has been a great advocate for the Champaign Park District.

IAPD Honored Professional – Greg Petry, Waukegan Park District

The IAPD Honored Professional award was presented to Greg Petry with the Waukegan Park District. Greg is the executive director of the district and has been active in the park and recreation industry for more than 40 years. He is a member of the Joint Legislative Committee, an IPRA Board Metro representative, a member of the NRPA Task Force, a member of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, and the founder and president of the Midwest Institute of Park Executives. Greg is recognized as a visionary in his community and his resourcefulness and commitment make him an ideal IAPD Honored Professional.



IPRA Community Impact – Jay Lerner, Waukegan Park District

Jay Lerner is the winner of the IPRA Community Impact award. Jay has been with the Waukegan Park District since 1998 and currently serves as the superintendent of recreation where he manages a staff of 21 and manages a budget of \$4 million dollars. Jay was instrumental in the design of two major sports venues; the Hinkston Sports and Fitness Center and the Waukegan Sports Park. Through his numerous relationships and his exceptional talent, Jay has made a tremendous economic and social impact on his community.



IAPD Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service – Dr. Larry Reiner, Buffalo Grove Park District

The winner of this year's IAPD Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service award is Dr. Larry Reiner, a commissioner with the Buffalo Grove Park District for more than 28 years and also the executive director of the Butterfield Park District since 2011. Larry has been a tireless advocate for legislation and funding to advance the park and recreation field. He served on more than 60 committees and boards, and he is active in creating programs to support Veterans. For his leadership and vision along with his selfless donation of an incalculable amount of time, Dr. Larry Reiner is more than worthy of the Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service award.

IPRA Professional of the Year – Margaret Resnick, Mundelein Park & Recreation Department

This year, the IPRA Professional award went to the executive director of the Mundelein Park and Recreation District, Margaret Resnick. Margaret is the consummate professional, possessing a balance of determination and compassion while leading by example. She has solidified the district's financial position by obtaining grants and alternate funding while managing expenses and engineering park improvements to drive up participation. Margaret has a wealth of knowledge and offers her talents to help advance the community she serves. For all of her efforts, Margaret Resnick was named the IPRA Professional of the Year.



IAPD Commissioner of the Year – Doug Brooks, Rockford Park District

Doug Brooks was awarded the IAPD Commissioner of the Year award. He has been a Rockford Park District commissioner since 2003. Doug influenced the strategic priorities of the park district board, and his foresight led to the Reclaiming First! Sports Tourism Economic Development Initiative. He also served for seven years on the Rockford Park District Foundation board, raising millions of dollars to support district programs and services. Doug serves on multiple boards in the community and is considered to be a great leader and visionary. Doug Brooks has the enthusiasm and commitment that embodies the spirit of an IAPD Commissioner of the Year.

PASSING THE GAVEL



IPRA Robert Artz Lifetime Achievement – Carolyn Nagle, Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

This year's IPRA Robert Artz Lifetime Achievement award went to Carolyn Nagle, the executive director of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association for the past 23 years. Carolyn has been an active leader in the parks and recreation field for almost 40 years. During this time, she has served on numerous boards and committees, consistently demonstrating strong leadership skills and a high level of integrity. Carolyn has also written many articles and presented at a number of conferences imparting her knowledge, passion and expertise on topics related to therapeutic recreation, certification and development. For all her accomplishments, Carolyn Nagle received the IPRA Robert Artz Lifetime Achievement award.

People's Choice – Arlington Heights Park District

This year's Agency Showcase once again featured a "People's Choice" award. All attendees were given the opportunity to vote for their favorite display of parks, recreation and conservation marketing and communications materials. This year's winner was the Arlington Heights Park District.



2016 Chairman of the IAPD Board of Trustees Ken Collin

Ken Collin, commissioner of the Freeport Park District, is the 2016 chairman of IAPD's board of trustees.

Ken joined the IAPD board in 2010 and will lead the 19-member board in advising the association in its service, research, advocacy, public awareness and educational programs for the membership.

He serves on the Research Advisory Council, the IAPD/IPRA Joint Coordinating Council and several IAPD committees including the Ambassadors, Board Development, Executive, Honors and Resolutions and Nominating committees. He was elected to the Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS) board in 2010 and served two years as chairman.

Ken was elected to the Freeport Park District in 2003, and has served in several capacities including president and vice-president. He is a strong supporter of youth programs, actively volunteering for the Freeport Park District's independently-funded and constructed Little Cubs Field. Ken has given generously of his time as a coach for Little League baseball and church league basketball. He is a former church elder.

Ken's heartfelt call to civic duty combined with leadership skills honed by a 40-year career in computer systems and programming are traits that will advance the IAPD mission of helping its member agencies thrive. Ken succeeds Diane Main, president of the Westmont Park District.

2016 Chairman of the IPRA Board of Directors Mary Jeanne Hutchison

Mary Jeanne Hutchison will serve as the chairman of the 2016 IPRA Board of Directors. She received a B.S. degree from Culver Stockton College and an M.S. degree from Western Illinois University. She is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) and has over 30 years of cumulative experience in managing, directing, coordinating and teaching park and recreational programs and systems.



Prior to her appointment in 2002 as parks & recreation director in O'Fallon, Mary Jeanne served as the superintendent of recreation and the director of the Rock Island Fitness & Activity Center for 11 years.

Mary Jeanne is a member of the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPR), treasurer of the Southwestern Illinois Special Recreation Association (SISRA), and a member of the Southern Illinois Park Recreation Association (SIPRA). She is the recipient of the American Red Cross Certificate of Recognition for Extraordinary Personal Action, the Red Cross Volunteer of the Year Award and the recipient of the Jaycees' Boss of the Year Award. Mary Jeanne succeeds Rick Hanetho, the executive director of Northbrook Park District.



What does the game of golf mean to you?

By **Casey Richards**, *Manager of Communications*
Chicago District Golf Association/Sunshine Through Golf Foundation

Most would say it's a fun hobby to take part in with friends and family, while others would call it a competitive outlet. For one unique group, however, golf is a therapeutic tool to help them navigate the challenges in their day-to-day lives. The Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program was established in 1999 to "bring joy to people with special needs through golf," which is the mission of the Chicago District Golf Association's charitable foundation. Foundation staff, CDGA member clubs and Special Recreation Associations (SRA) combined to put on 92 camps for more than 1,200 individuals with special needs in 2015, both high-water marks for the program that the USGA calls the country's largest grassroots golf program for individuals with special needs.



“First and foremost, we want the kids to come out... whether it's for the golf or for the social atmosphere, just to get away from the normal day for them.”

Those numbers would have been difficult for Cog Hill Golf and Country Club's Jeff Rimsnider to imagine nearly 17 years ago. Rimsnider, who was in his ninth year at Cog Hill, was approached by CDGA Executive Director Robert Markianni to run the first Sunshine Through Golf Camp.

Rimsnider had extensive experience working with junior golfers, but individuals with special needs were a different story. While others may have been hesitant to take up the challenge, Rimsnider was more than willing to help get the program off the ground.

“I had never really had any association with kids with special needs and stuff like that, but I was up for it,” Rimsnider recalled.

Rimsnider, working with the Tri County SRA, structured the camp “like a basic junior program” and also relied upon advice from his wife Shawnae, a school speech therapist.

“She just said to keep it really simple and basic and get them to have some fun,” Rimsnider said. “That's basically what I ran with. From the first day, you just do really simple stuff and get them to try to get the ball in the air and go from there.”

Rimsnider's method worked. The first camp was a resounding success in that it not only paved the way for numerous camps to be added in the future, but also kept four of the initial participants coming back to the Cog Hill camp year after year.

“It's nice to see that,” Rimsnider said of the Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program's expansion. “It's rewarding.”

While continuing to put on the Cog Hill camp, Rimsnider's son was diagnosed with special needs, which further strengthened his commitment to the program.

“It is kind of neat how I can relate more to my son, and vice versa,” Rimsnider explained. “I can relate to the group because of my son, and I can also relate to my son because of this group that I've been working with.”

The “keep it fun and simple” formula that Rimsnider employed in 1999 maintains the staple of today's camps. Club and SRA staff work with the groups of campers anywhere from 5-8 weeks, introducing basic principles of woods, irons, chipping, putting, etiquette and rules through both range and on-course time. Some place an emphasis on learning the fundamentals, while others prefer letting the campers play on the course the majority of time. The format is determined by the professional staff involved and the campers' level of familiarity with the game.

“The beauty about each Sunshine Through Golf Camp is that they are different from one another,” said Alex Nolly, Director of Foundation Administration. “The golf pro teaching the camp will use their years of experience to tailor a teaching lesson plan for each camp depending on the ability of the golfers.”

All camps conclude with a celebratory cookout and awards presentation. Every camper is presented with a gift package and membership card for the Foundation's Three-Hole Sunshine Course at Midwest Golf House, which is designed specifically for special needs golfers.

Another integral player in the program's growth has been Danny Mulhearn of Glen Oak Country Club. Mulhearn's camp at Glen Oak is one of the Foundation's longest-running, as he was one of the first to adopt the program in its early stages. When Jim Sutherland, Mulhearn's assistant pro, left for St. Charles Country Club in 2007, it didn't take long for him to start a camp of his own. And when Curtis Malm left Sutherland's side for White Eagle in 2014, he started a camp without hesitation as well.



The reason all three have been such willing participants is simple.

"It does more for us than it does for the campers," Mulhearn said.

Mulhearn and his staff, Sutherland included, developed a program that, while still featuring golf instruction, is more about providing a fun experience that can be enjoyed by each individual participant.

"First and foremost, we want the kids to come out," Mulhearn said, "whether it's for the golf or for the social atmosphere, just to get away from the normal day for them."

Mulhearn's estimation is that the Glen Oak camp, which is run in conjunction with the Western DuPage SRA, has featured primarily younger kids mostly between the ages of 10 and 13. While Sutherland hasn't been with Glen Oak since 2007, Mulhearn still remembers how this age group particularly enjoyed interaction with his former assistant.

"They gravitated towards Jimmy like they'd known him forever," Mulhearn said. "He has that magnetism around those kids. They loved coming out and seeing him."

"It's a really rewarding and fulfilling experience," Sutherland added. "At first, there is some trepidation because you don't know what you are getting into, but once you start doing it, they're just great kids and it's a lot of fun."

Unlike the camps he helped run at Glen Oak, Sutherland's camps at St. Charles, put on with help from the Fox Valley SRA, have featured predominately young adults. In conjunction with Malm, a St. Charles assistant pro at the time, Sutherland developed a program that spends less time on the practice range and more time on the golf course.

"We figured out that they really enjoy going out on the golf course and playing," Sutherland explained.

After five years as Sutherland's assistant at St. Charles, Malm moved on to White Eagle in the winter of 2013.

Similar to the group he worked with at St. Charles, White Eagle's camp, also put on in conjunction with the Western DuPage SRA, consists of mainly young adults. Malm cherishes the relationships formed with the campers, citing one particular example as evidence.

"I like seeing the kids over and over every year," Malm said. "I had a kid that I got to know here through the program that turned out to be a brother of one of the kids that played on my son's hockey team. It worked out. Every time I'd go to the hockey rink to see him practice or play, he'd always be there and we'd talk golf. He was telling me how jacked up he was to get the program started back up. That was pretty neat, to see that you can see these kids and young adults outside of just the camp and know how much fun they were having and how excited they were for it."

Like Mulhearn and Sutherland, Malm's experiences with the Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program over the years have brought both him and the campers continued enjoyment.

"The pure excitement of the kids and young adults is what it's all about," Malm said. "As a golf professional, Wednesdays at 4 p.m., you'd think the last thing you want to do is sit on the range or go out on the golf course and give lessons for another hour. After knowing how much fun these kids are going to have and what a difference they can make to them, it's really easy and it's a no-brainer to do."

Walking while carrying or pushing your clubs. Par-4 and par-5 holes reaching up to 600 yards. A four-plus hour round. Many things you consider standard for a round of golf are not possible for some people. However, with the help of the Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program, Rimsnider, Mulhearn, Sutherland, Malm and many more, individuals with special needs are able to enjoy the game of golf in their own unique way.

For more information on the Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program, contact Alex Nolly at anolly@cdga.org or (630) 685-2351.

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REMEMBER THE

“Golf Boom”

by **Dave Huber**, *Golf Pro, Lake of the Woods Golf Course,
Champaign County Forest Preserve District*

As a young PGA professional, I worked for public, private and resort golf facilities. Golf was booming, real estate developers were building new courses at a rate of almost a course a day and PGA tour pros on TV became celebrities. I worked in several public golf courses pro shops during the 70s, 80s and 90s when avid golfers would wait in their course parking lot at 3:00 a.m. in the morning.



But that was then and this is 2016, where for the last decade or so this phenomenon has mostly disappeared along with the seemingly endless stream of revenue it generated.

Anxious golfers would follow the staff from their cars into the building just to be first in line to make a tee time, sometimes for that day but more likely for the following week! It would be solid back to back tee times well into the afternoon. Play would only let up at the very least desirable tee times just before the discounted "Twilight" rates started. Golfers would play even though they were not assured of enough daylight to finish all 18 holes - it was crazy! At Lake of the Woods Golf Course, Champaign County Forest Preserve in the 1990s, our average annual play for our 18 hole regulation and 9 hole par 3 courses was 45-48,000 rounds. To staff that level of play, we needed two shifts of starters, course marshals and lots of golf cart and maintenance people. The shop was open before daylight and the pro shop staff seldom went home until well after dark.

But that was then and this is 2016, where for the last decade or so this phenomenon has mostly disappeared along with the seemingly endless stream of revenue it generated. This situation has prompted many public operations to ask hard questions regarding their golf facility's future. In our area, between 1990 and 2016 six full 18 hole regulation golf courses and one executive course / practice range have opened within an hour's drive. During that same period of time our play numbers have dropped to 23,000-26,000 rounds annually. Wow... more courses and a lot less players, what could go wrong!

Historically golf course facilities have made money, sometimes lots of money. Now that the golf industry has taken a cyclical downturn, it seems at least the public sector has been pushed into a situation where golf has to pay for itself. It may be apples and oranges but no one expects the bike trails or playgrounds in their community to pay for themselves or the capital improvements necessary to maintain them. Perhaps because golfers pay fees in addition to the tax based money that supports those facilities it must seem like a fair question for managing boards and committees to ask "should we subsidize golf?" Most public golf facilities can still support the ongoing operational expenses but few can cover all their capital and infrastructure expenses.

All of that being said, it is important to remember that the reasons we have golf courses in the first place is not primarily as a for-profit business. Public golf courses level the playing field for those young and old to be able to afford to play golf. The open green space and recreation provided by golf courses embraces the same core values and goals as other park and recreation facilities.

Enough about the state of the industry. What are courses doing now to try to fill the revenue gap? Here at Lake of the Woods Golf Course we have added two nontraditional golf offerings in the form of Foot Golf and Indoor Golf Simulators to try to keep up the level of activity and increase revenue.



The simulators' initial cost was \$30,000.00 (\$15,000 each x2) so far upgrades and repairs have been slightly higher than expected but revenue now well exceeds ongoing expenses each year.

Foot Golf is a fast growing sport played with the same basic rules of golf but where a player kicks a regulation #5 soccer ball from a designated tee box into a 21" hole in as few kicks as possible. Foot Golf is usually played over 9 or 18 hole courses that range in length for a Par 3 hole of up to 90 yards and Par 5 holes of up to 150 yards. Exactly like golf, the fewest kicks (strokes) wins. Many facilities superimpose an 18 hole Foot Golf Course over just 9 holes of an existing regulation golf course. Here at Lake of the Woods Golf Course we added a 737 yard 9 hole Par 3 Foot Golf Course on top of our existing Par 3 course. So far participation has grown steadily. We have had a few outings with local groups wanting a fun outdoor activity that takes less time and is easy to learn compared to traditional golf. Local soccer coaches have brought their teams out to practice skill building exercises in a new and unique setting.

It's not surprising that Foot Golf's popularity has emerged as interest in traditional golf has declined among millennials. With 643 United States golf courses closing between 2006 and 2014, Foot Golf has helped financially shore up several floundering courses. While Foot Golf alone won't make up for all of the lost revenue of golf's maxed out prime time, it is a breath of fresh air and a welcome increase in participation for many golf facilities.

Golf Simulators have come a long way in a short time; for one thing, golfers can now play almost 100 famous world-class golf courses and receive meaningful swing data along the way. The computer software that drives them can handle just about any format of play from match

play to alternate shot. You can scramble with your friends as well as practice your full swing all the way down to putting practice. New realistic graphics are leading the way towards arcade-style games on the simulator such as target practice and a driving range game where you hit the ball picker to make it explode! Maybe we can get the millennials back at the golf course with that! With the addition of the internet cloud interface, golfers can compete in Hole In One contests, play in a worldwide golf league or receive feedback on their swing from an instructor located anywhere on the planet. Plenty of diversions to help keep the winter boredom away.

Here are some revenue facts for Lake of the Woods golf course. We installed the first TruGolf golf simulator in October of 2012 then added another one the next November. To date 1/20/2016 we have generated an additional \$37,141.00 on golf simulator fees alone without including the additional food, beverage and merchandise sales due to increased simulator activity.

The simulators' initial cost was \$30,000.00 (\$15,000 each x2) so far upgrades and repairs have been slightly higher than expected but revenue now well exceeds ongoing expenses each year.

Foot Golf: Up and running as of July, 2014 with an initial cost of \$2700.00 has made a total of \$9,343.00. Not a huge total but more than 3 times our investment and close to 1500 foot golfers have made it around the course and had a lot of fun. After all...we are in the recreation business!

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Park District



BY: **TODD WINTER**, GOLF SERVICES MANAGER, ROCK ISLAND PARKS AND RECREATION

GOLF TRENDS

“ALL KINDS OF GOLF-FUNDRAISING PARTNERSHIPS”

According to the National Golf Foundation, the golf industry has lost over 5 million rounds since 2008 from 30 million to 25 million. Furthermore, the rounds lost came mostly from “infrequent” customers, which are defined as those who play less than 18 rounds per year. These realities, coupled with an aging baby boomer population and the rise of the millennial generation has left the golf industry scrambling for new ideas to increase rounds, generate revenue, and to simply remain relevant.



Over the past several years, many golf clubs and courses around the country, including the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department, and its two municipal 18-hole golf courses, have attempted to address the issues of declining participation, the perception of golf, and the need to appeal to a wider base of participants.

Golf as a game and industry has a brand and perception issue among families and young adults aged 18-34. According to a study published by the National Golf Foundation titled “Golf & the Millennial Generation” golf is seen as elitist, expensive and time consuming. The traditional norms of the game (playing 18 holes, keeping score, following the rules, adhering to dress codes) are unappealing and turn off many young adults and those new to the game. (Lorentz, Getherall, Bein, & Beditz, 2015).

Based on these findings, the golf industry needs to find ways to make the game faster and more of an experience to justify its value. “Key considerations for attracting young people to golf are creating a more “chill” environment, offering a golf plus experience including elements outside of golf, and changing the elitist perception.” (Lorentz, et al, 2015)

Over the past several years, many golf clubs and courses around the country, including the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department, and its two municipal 18-hole golf courses, have attempted to address the issues of declining participation, the perception of golf, and the need to appeal to a wider base of participants. “We realize that relying on daily-fee golfers, corporate leagues, and charity outings isn’t going to pay the bills as much as it has in the past. We knew we had to take matters into our own hands, to a certain degree.” said Rock Island Parks & Recreation director, Bill Nelson. So, the department’s golf staff, under the direction of recreation superintendent John Gripp, is ambitiously creating and implementing events, leagues, and other activities to get people to the courses, each with a specific target market in mind. “We’ve seen great success with 2-man scrambles for ages 50 and up, ladies’ tournaments,

junior leagues, couples’ nights, and our in-house 2-man league,” commented Gripp. In addition to in-house events, the golf courses have partnered with a local brewery for a popular beer tasting and golf outing. The last two years nine-hole events were held with Bent River, a brewery in Rock Island. Players play in a scramble format with fun contests throughout the round with dinner following golf. The real attraction, though, is the beer tasting stations throughout the course. As players approach the tee box they are offered a sample of one of Bent River’s many beers. “It’s been a great partnership between the course and one of our local businesses, and it’s a format that we can expand with other organizations,” said Gripp.

Going a step beyond, the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department is attempting to create an event that will appeal to young adults, juniors, and families in the form of partnerships with local community clubs and organizations.

The city of Rock Island operates two 18-Hole golf courses, Highland Springs and Saukie. Saukie is an “executive” style course with 6 par 3s and a total par of 66, which make it more suitable to those new to the game. Evolving from previous events and partnerships an event (still a work in progress admittedly), currently titled All Kinds of Golf is being planned for the spring of 2016. The event combines golf, foot (soccer) golf, and disc golf into a 9-hole event that is intended to be fun, fast-paced, and for people of all ages and abilities. “We know, in a traditional sense, the game of golf needs help, and we’ve seen the increasing popularity of foot and disc golf locally and nationally, so this is a great time to try to combine the three into one event that we can use to attract new participants to our course,” commented Gripp.



Through creative events we have an opportunity to increase the use of the golf course, raise revenue, and introduce the sport to a growing segment of the population all while helping out our local community.

The event has been in the works since the fall of 2015 when a similar idea was attempted for the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department's annual, after-work, employee golf outing. "In the past, many of our employees would eat with us, and leave since they were not golfers and felt they couldn't participate in a traditional golf outing. So we knew we needed to mix the event up to get everyone involved," said Nelson.

Teams of four competed over 9 holes with each hole offering a new challenge. On Hole One each team member had to chip a tennis ball (using SNAG (Starting New at Golf) equipment) onto a Velcro bulls-eye target. If anyone on the team got the ball on the target they could advance directly to the green. If not they teed off from the normal tee box. Once on the green team members took turns putting to the golf hole with a mini-golf obstacle surrounding it. On Hole Two, members had to throw a disc into a disc golf basket. On Hole Three, players had to choose which type of ball to play the hole (soccer, tennis ball & racket, football, etc). The participants then had to play the entire hole with that ball. Each hole featured a challenge along these lines. "The employees loved it. The round was fast, less than 2 hours. The non-golfers were more relaxed, but it also introduced the basic elements of the game from the tee box to the green," commented Nelson.

Following the popularity of the employee outing, the staff at Rock Island realized they could expand this idea and use it to attract new customers to Saukie. So, the idea of promoting partnerships with local community organizations began to take shape. Each year the department is inundated with requests for donations for various local charities. Furthermore, the golf courses host dozens of traditional golf outings for local groups each year. Many of these groups however are limited in their participation to golfers, leaving out families, young adults, and children who are strangers to the game. "We recognized the power of partnering with these groups and the potential for creating a mutually beneficial event that will not only help bring new customers to the course, but also strengthen our community bonds," said Gripp.

Therefore, the All Kinds of Golf Event is being pitched to local community groups as a unique event that can be used as a fundraiser, with most of the work being done by the golf course staff. The setup, supplies, and registration are all done at the course. All the group needs to do is get their members, families, and supporters to participate. The course and the group split the proceeds. The event addresses two of the main perceived obstacles to participation; time and elitism. "This event is fast and fun for all abilities and ages. It breaks down the entrenched rules of golf, and creates a team-environment and an experience that participants can share with their friends and family," said Nelson.

A showcase event is in the plans for this spring to invite local groups to get a taste of the event for themselves. Groups interested in hosting one of their own can pick from a pre-determined set of dates. In the meantime, the golf staff is busy acquiring supplies, developing potential hole layouts, and creating a set of games/challenges from which the groups can choose based on their organization theme. "One of the advantages of this format is its flexibility. We can modify the layout and challenges based on the organization and its theme. For instance, a local baseball team can use baseball themed challenges on each hole or Boy Scout groups might use nature-related challenges," commented Gripp.

Golf courses offer acres of beautiful, green space that add value to our communities. New and creative methods can be used to make our golf courses more accessible and form meaningful partnerships with local organizations that will ultimately strengthen the community as a whole. Through creative events we have an opportunity to increase the use of the golf course, raise revenue, and introduce the sport to a growing segment of the population all while helping out our local community.

Bein, E., Beditz, J., Getherall, E., Lorentz, D. (2015). "Golf and the Millennial Generation". National Golf Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.ngf.org>



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Junior Golf - The Future of our Business

by **Brian Smith**, *Golf Course Manager/Head Golf Professional, Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club, Channahon Park District*

The famous lyrics by Whitney Houston "I believe the children are our future" is a very poignant statement in more ways than one. They are the future of everything we have and do. At the Channahon Park District's Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club we see the value of growing future golfers. The children are the future of golf. This game has shaped so many of our lives through the years. It has taught us integrity; name another sport in which players call penalties on themselves. It has taught us patience, because without it golf is a difficult task. And for a lot of us it has taught us that life is about the journey not the end result. It is these lessons that have shaped some of us into who we are. It is also these lessons that we need to pass along to our children. Golf will benefit from our children, and our children will benefit from golf.

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Growing the Game - Golf's Future – Junior Golf Opportunities

By **Matt Johnson**, *Manager/Head Professional Winnetka Golf Club, a facility of the Winnetka Park District*

Square Links Golf Course and Driving Range

By **Jim Randall**, *Executive Director, Frankfort Square Park District*

REVISIONING A NIKE MISSILE BASE, How the Arlington Heights Park District is Reviving the Aging Arlington Lakes Golf Course

By **Brian Meyer**, *Director of Recreation and Facilities* and **Anita M. Pacheco**, *Supt. of Marketing and Communications*



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The 2015 IP&R Magazine Photo Contest Awards

The Illinois Association of Park Districts and Illinois Park and Recreation Association are proud of the high caliber of content that our readers submit to *Illinois Parks & Recreation* magazine.

We are especially grateful to those in the field who have an eye for capturing the beauty of the parks, the wonder of nature and the smiles on the faces of young and old alike, who have participated in the programs offered by Illinois' outstanding park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.

Congratulations to our 2015 Give Us Your Best Shot photo contest winners!



RECREATION/PEOPLE AT PLAY



1st Place

Diana Zimmerman
Champaign Park District
"Peeking Through a Park Bench"

2nd Place

Joy Stuart
Northbrook Park District
"Hamster Ball Adventure"



SPORTS



1st Place

Mike Frankowski
St. Charles Park District
"Tiny Tots Track Meet"

2nd Place

Jeremy Bloom
Northbrook District
"Liberty Loop"



WILDLIFE

1st Place

Ryca Shih
Park District of
Highland Park
"A Heller Nature
Center Beauty"



2nd Place

Deb Engdahl
Mundelein Park &
Recreation District
"Cherry Chipmunk"

NATURE/LANDSCAPE



1st Place

Jose Galue
Urbana Park District
"First Snowfall at Chief
Shemauger Park"

2nd Place

Justin Sienkiewicz
Schaumburg District
"Winter is Coming"

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who submitted a photo in 2015.

And, as always, we thank the judge who made the tough decisions. He reviewed more than 350 outstanding photos.

Photo Judge

Steve Hinrichs,
11 Acre Studio



PEOPLE & PLACES



Prospect Heights Park District Welcomes New Executive Director, Christina Ferraro

The Illinois Association of Park Districts assisted the board of commissioners of the Prospect Heights Park District in hiring **Christina Ferraro** to lead the agency. She began employment in January 2016.

Ferraro has nearly 25 years of professional experience in the park and recreation field.

She served in several capacities at the Norridge Park District. Initially as the adult center coordinator and then superintendent of recreation, she was responsible for senior & youth programs, pool & fitness center.

Ferraro served the City of Evanston in several capacities as well; most recently as the assistant director of community services for the City's Parks Recreation & Community Services Department where she was responsible for arts, festivals, ecology, senior programs, several facilities and services for at-risk families.

She holds a master's degree in management in nonprofit administration and her MBA, both from North Park University in Chicago; and bachelor's degree in sociology from Northern Illinois University.

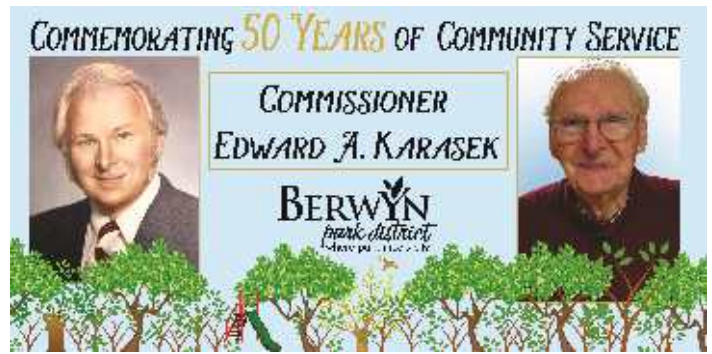
Ferraro has experience in developing staff and boards, engaging the community and managing facilities and programs.



In Memoriam

Charles R. "Chuck" Paxton was a true leader in the field of parks and recreation and will be greatly missed in his lifelong hometown of Zion, IL. Chuck served as the first director of the Zion Park District and shepherded it diligently for 24 years- 1962-1986. He cultivated many of our facilities during his tenure and was very protective of the legacy of Zion's parks. He influenced many staff over the

years, who have carried the principles he taught them to many professions, including parks and recreation across the country. Chuck also served his home community after his retirement as director of parks and Recreation with one term as Mayor of Zion 1996-1999. Chuck shared his leadership beyond his community as the president of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association in 1975-76. Chuck received the IPRA Professional Award in 1976 with his work in the field and also achieved recognition with an IPRA Fellow Award in 1985. Chuck's legacy is summed up simply in his last request, "In memory of Chuck and in the spirit of Christ show someone kindness today."



Edward Karasek Celebrates 50 Years as a Berwyn Park District Commissioner

Please join the Berwyn Park District as it Celebrates 50 years of dedicated service by **Edward A. Karasek** to the residents of Berwyn as a park district commissioner. Originally appointed to the board on April 16, 1966, Ed will meet the 50 year golden milestone at the March 15, 2016 board meeting. In 1966, the District owned one park, Proksa Park also known as the Jewel of the Western Suburbs. Under his watch and through his determination to acquire additional lands and playgrounds, the district has grown to 13 parks in a land locked community. Commissioner Karasek attends all meetings and functions and is very committed to volunteer public service having been involved with the local school PTA, and the All Berwyn Civic Committee. Additionally, he has been a Kiwanis member for more than 60 years and has a perfect attendance record. Ed and his wife will be celebrating their 66th Wedding Anniversary in April of this year as well. Commissioner Karasek was awarded the Commissioner of the Year in 2011 by the Illinois Association of Park Districts. According to executive director Jeffrey Janda, "Commissioner Karasek is the consummate commissioner who always supports the parks and recreation. He is an avid gardener and volunteers in the Proksa Park Garden Club. He also takes time to smell the roses." Commissioner Karasek was recently interviewed for IAPD's Legend's series which is available at www.ilparks.com. Congratulations Ed on 50 years of selfless service to parks and recreation!



Lan-Oak Park District Announces the Retirement of Director John Wilson

John Wilson began his career in parks and recreation as a golf caddie at Danville Country Club at 10 years old. He's worked in the field ever since, spending time as recreation planner and superintendent of parks for his

hometown of Danville, Illinois, director of the Chicago Ridge Park District and Grayslake Community Park District and superintendent of parks for the Park District of LaGrange. Lan-Oak Park District first hired John as director in March 1999. He'll stay on to help oversee the transition to a new management structure until his official last day on February 29, 2016.

At the district, he oversaw the development of Park Plaza and the Pennsy Greenway, a trail that now extends 8 miles from Calumet City to Schererville. LOPD and the village of Lansing recently received an award for the project from DePaul University's Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development.

Board Member Development Program Awards

IAPD's Board Member Development program recognizes local board members who continuously go above and beyond the call of duty. Board members earn credit for attending educational and legislative programs, events and board or committee meetings on the local, state and national levels.

This year we have 4 board members have earned the highest ranking status in the program - Master Board Member.



Mary Kay Ludemann
Plainfield Township Park District



Pat McGinn
Hoffman Estates Park District



Georgia Schroeder
Wood Dale Park District



Wynn Ullman
Carol Stream Park District

This year, 5 board members achieved Distinctive Board Member status.



Cathleen McDermott
Park District of Forest Park



Jesse Ortega
Mundelein Park & Recreation District



Mike Vogl
Bloomingdale Park District



Matthew Walsh
Park District of Forest Park



Dave Wick
Park District of Oak Park



Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department Announces the Retirement of Executive Director, William Nelson

William Nelson, executive director of the Parks and Recreation Department for the City of Rock Island, announced his upcoming retirement. "I am very fortunate to have been able to serve the Citizens of Rock Island and work with a fantastic staff that has provided many recreational opportunities to our community," said William.

William, a graduate of Indiana University, began his work with the City of Rock Island in 1998. During his tenure as director, the department provided many improvements to the community including the construction and operation of Whitewater Junction Aquatic Park, two expansions of the Rock Island Fitness and Activity Center, the development and operation of Schwiebert Riverfront Park, improvements to Highland Springs and Saukie Golf Courses, and the additions of MLK Jr. Park and Rauch Park.

During his directorship, many of the parks received new playgrounds and improvements including the development of the first dog park in the Quad Cities, pickleball courts, new tennis courts at Hodge Park, and the electronic playground at Schwiebert Riverfront Park.



Peoria Park District Announces the Retirement of Executive Director Bonnie Noble

Bonnie Noble, the executive director of the Peoria Park District who has her name enshrined on the district's administrative offices, announced her retirement Monday morning, effective April 30, 2016. "I think it was just the opportunity of realizing I wanted to spend some time with my family and my grandsons," Bonnie said.

Her retirement will end a run of 43 years in which Bonnie presided over the park district in some leadership capacity — 19 as a board of trustees member and board president, and 24 as the executive director.

Among the many highlights of her tenure, the foremost include a partnership with OSF Saint Francis Medical Center to build the RiverPlex and the development of the Rock Island Trail and its completion in 2013 with the Knoxville Avenue bridge. Bonnie said she also took great pride in the park district receiving four National Gold Medal Awards for park and recreation management.

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It is with sincere appreciation and gratitude to our Members that in this, our 25th anniversary year, we extend to you a heartfelt...

Thank You!



IPARKS

Illinois Parks Association Risk Services
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