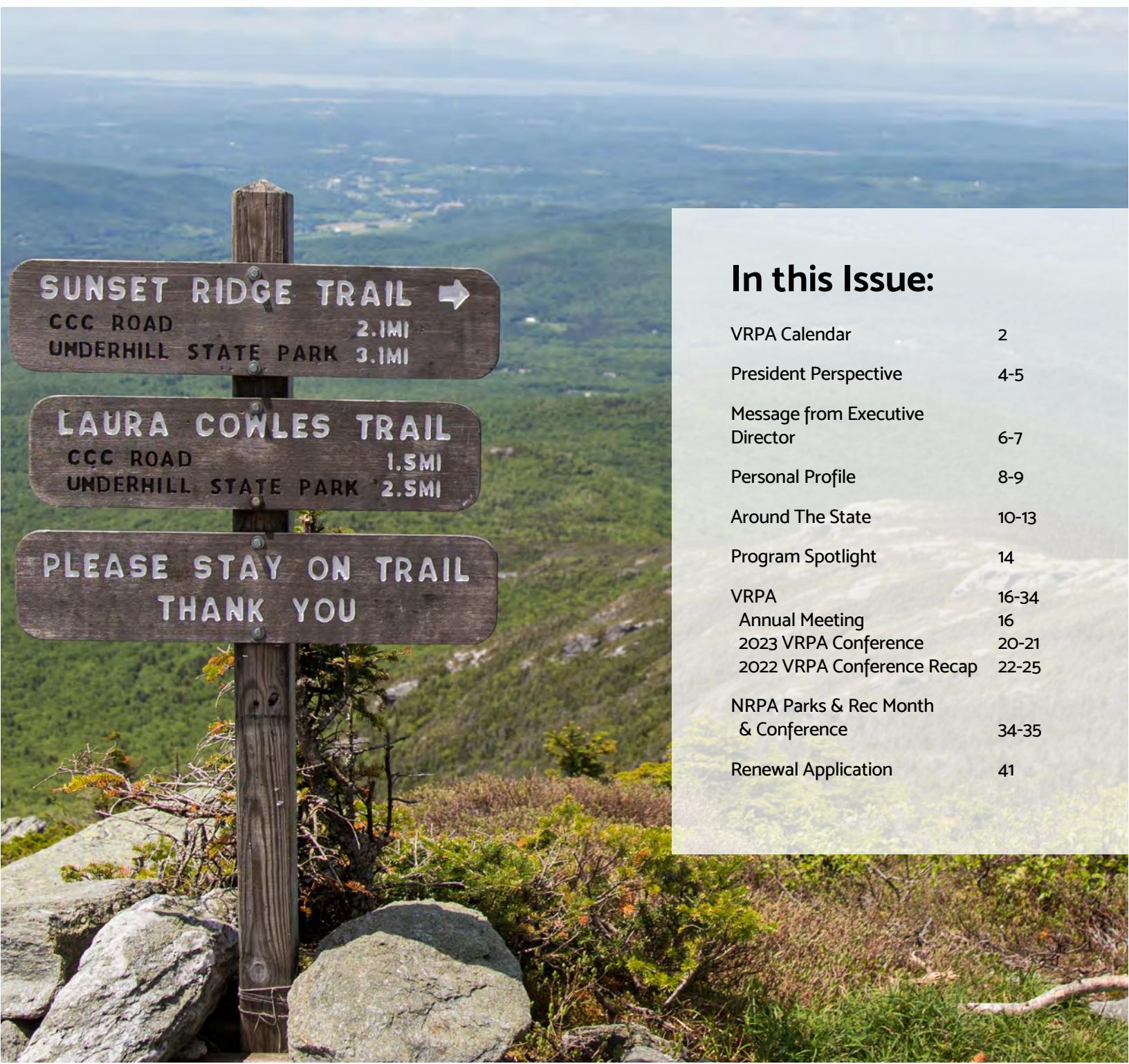




ISSUE 102 | ANNUAL 2023

ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association



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VRPA Executive Committee Officers

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878-1342
(Burlington)

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April Cioffi
(Rutland)

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(South Burlington)

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(Vt State Parks)

Drew Pollak-Bruce, CPRP
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(Winooski)

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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: Jessica Brodie

Next issue submission deadline:
December 31, 2023
Send to: Jessica@vrpa.org or by mail to:
VRPA, PO Box 33
Brownsville, VT, 05037



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

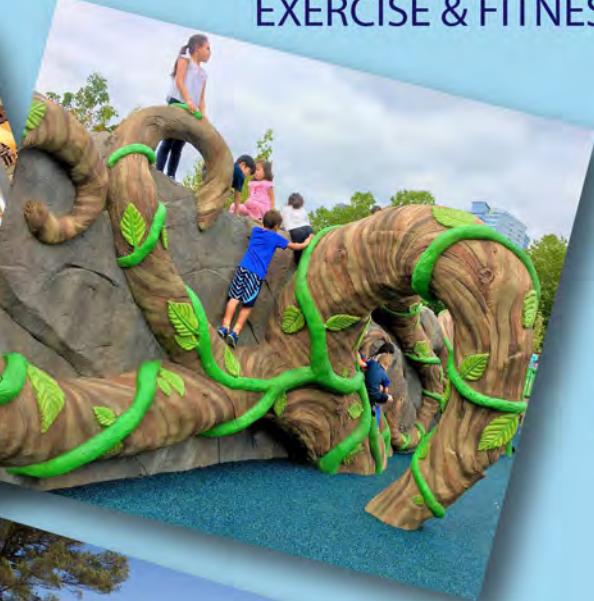
2023

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------|
| May 10 | VRPA Annual Meeting | Montpelier, VT |
| June 6 | VT Maintenance Workshop | Middlebury, VT |
| June 16 | Summerama Camp Staff Training | Burlington, VT |
| June & July | VT State Pickleball Tournament Regional qualifiers | |
| July 22 | VT State Track & Field Meet | St. Johnsbury Academy |
| July | Parks & Recreation Month VRPA Fundraising Raffle | |
| August 12 & 13 | VT State Pickleball Championship Tournament | Chittenden County |
| September 27-28 | VT Conference on Recreation & Trails Symposium | Killington, VT |
| October 10-12 | NRPA National Conference | Dallas, TX |
| December | VRPA Quarterly Meeting | |
| January 9-11 | Northern New England Recreation & Parks Conference | Mountain View Grand |
| February | Parks Maintenance Training | |
| March | CPO Course & VRPA Quarterly Meeting | |
| April | Aquatic Facility Operator Course / Aquatic Safety | |

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

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VRPA PRESIDENT'S perspective



I hope everyone enjoyed the end of 2022 and had a terrific holiday season! With 2023 in full swing, I hope had time to reflect on your many accomplishments from last year. We work so incredibly hard in this profession and sometimes our work goes overlooked, is underappreciated or misunderstood by people who don't understand the pressures, challenges or nuances of our profession. On behalf of the VRPA executive committee, thank you for everything you did in 2022 to make the lives of your community members better! And I hope you had some fun along the way!

I recently had the opportunity to write an article for the Agency of Natural Resources newsletter in which I made a pitch for the various Vermont State Parks seasonal employment opportunities. In that article I wrote that were looking for applicants who shared our values: Safety, Caring, Integrity, Passion and Fun. As we look to professional and personal goals in 2023, I challenge all of you to consider your core values. Do you know what they are? How will your values guide you this year? Are your recruiting applicants who share your values? Does your community know what your core values are?

It may be the dead of winter, but things are heating up with Vermont State Parks already. We're heavily marketing our 400 seasonal positions, reaching out to last year's employees, reviewing new applications and setting up interviews. We've held three spring training planning meetings so far for our spring training event in early-May for all of our park managers, which is the equivalent of standing up a three-day conference with 20 education sessions, eight separate meals, lodging for two nights and two trips into a park setting. Additionally, we're elbows deep into a Parks Modernization Study, an internet connectivity project, putting the final touches on our operating budget and getting ready to testify for our capital bill. Add to that entering purchase requisitions, purchase orders, writing contracts and holding public meetings for upcoming construction work, and we have a pretty busy off-season. Actually, there is no off-season anymore to be honest! But I know I'm preaching to the choir!

Here in VRPA-land, we are closing out our fiscal year in a few months. We'll soon be drafting our next operating budget and planning our next year of operation. As we move toward the end of our current fiscal year, we have a few educational opportunities to take advantage of, including the Certified Playground Safety Instructor, Certified Pool/Spa Operator Course and Playground Maintenance Training. Additionally, planning for the Vermont Maintenance Workshop is underway. As a long-time maintenance technician in Vermont State Parks has often told me, "Things are happening!" (This is also my favorite line from the movie **Almost Famous**). I couldn't agree more. Things are definitely happening!

Whatever is *happening* for you right now, I wish you nothing but the best as you make our way through 2023. Cheers and Happy New Year! ■

Rob

Rob Peterson CPRP
VRPA President

Message

from the Executive Director



An exciting year ahead!

Happy Spring!

I hope you all have had a great start to 2023 and are looking forward to the spring, summer, and fall seasons to come!

There are so many exciting new things happening at the VRPA this coming year, and I hope you take time to look through this newsletter as it will be the only one we issue this year. For the first time, the VRPA is just going to be organizing this, new annual newsletter. In this issue you will find highlights from a few of our past events, and information on so many other upcoming events and other interesting articles.

We know you are all stretched thin in your time and capacity, so we hope to make some changes in the coming year to make it easier to share your stories and relay information. Our annual newsletter is a start, followed by more social media presence, as well as some other technology updates at our annual conference.

Since this is the only time I will be relaying a personal newsletter article to you this year, I wanted to be sure to remind you to take a moment to admire all the summer programs, events, facilities, and activities you were able to make happen this past year and in the year ahead. Take a walk through one of your parks, write a list of new goals, talk to co-workers about their experiences, and be sure to connect with your community members to see what new programs or events they are hoping for in the future. The start of a new season is a great chance to take a breath and figure out the best path forward for you and your department in the forever changing landscape we are all living in.

The VRPA is here to support you in the ways needed – from finding new funding opportunities, advocating for your needs, and providing new trainings. Let us know what your continued challenges and needs are and we will be sure to work hard to help you with those this year and beyond. We are excited to offer a full schedule of in-person meetings and trainings again this year, and would love to hear about any new opportunities your staff may be interested in.

Our 80th annual conference on recreation is taking place September 27th & 28th at the Killington Grand hotel. We are so excited to see you all again this year at a new location and with a new conference partner – the Vermont Trails & Greenways Council, who is helping us organize a Trails Symposium as part

of this year's conference. We look forward to seeing you all for some great education sessions and networking opportunities and hope you will join us! We have over 30 speakers lined up, and two days of learning & networking. Don't miss the fun and the 80th celebration!

The year ahead will be full of great opportunities to help you and your communities professionally. If you have never volunteered on a VRPA committee, this is your year! Serving on a committee at any capacity you are able not only helps the association, but builds your network and professional experience as well. This helps your department have insights and local connections, and supports new learning opportunities for professionals around the state. Reach out anytime to learn more!

I would like to thank all our new members that have joined VRPA, and an extra big thank you to those that have volunteered so much of their time on our various committees to help plan all these wonderful events for everyone. Thank you to all of our commercial members and vendors that joined us as new or returning members this year, to those that have sponsored and advertised with us, and to all those that have volunteered time to support our efforts. Your involvement and support is truly appreciated, thank you!

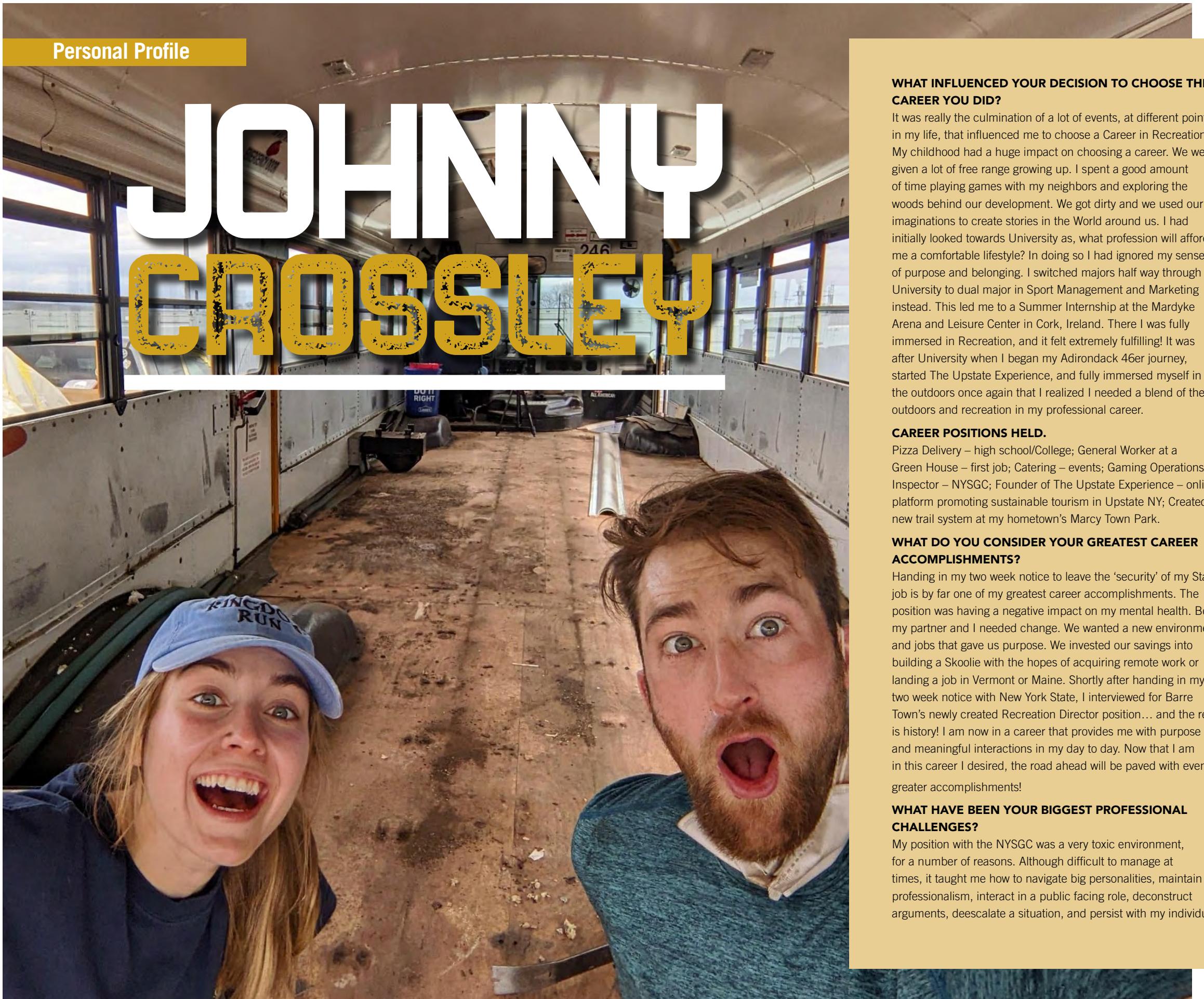
As I reflect personally on the past year and month ahead, it has been an ongoing balance like everyone else to juggle work, kids, and life in general. Everyone I talk to feels stretched thin these days, so don't feel alone if that is how you feel as well. I am so thankful for the work you do, as I get to live it with my own kids through youth sports, summer camps, state parks, and all the other ways you as professionals make fun happen! Thank you all for helping keep our communities connected and growing!

Keep up the amazing work everyone and I look forward to seeing you all soon! ■

Sincerely,

Jessica Brodie
Executive Director

Personal Profile



WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR DECISION TO CHOOSE THE CAREER YOU DID?

It was really the culmination of a lot of events, at different points in my life, that influenced me to choose a Career in Recreation. My childhood had a huge impact on choosing a career. We were given a lot of free range growing up. I spent a good amount of time playing games with my neighbors and exploring the woods behind our development. We got dirty and we used our imaginations to create stories in the World around us. I had initially looked towards University as, what profession will afford me a comfortable lifestyle? In doing so I had ignored my sense of purpose and belonging. I switched majors half way through University to dual major in Sport Management and Marketing instead. This led me to a Summer Internship at the Mardyke Arena and Leisure Center in Cork, Ireland. There I was fully immersed in Recreation, and it felt extremely fulfilling! It was after University when I began my Adirondack 46er journey, started The Upstate Experience, and fully immersed myself in the outdoors once again that I realized I needed a blend of the outdoors and recreation in my professional career.

CAREER POSITIONS HELD.

Pizza Delivery – high school/College; General Worker at a Green House – first job; Catering – events; Gaming Operations Inspector – NYSGC; Founder of The Upstate Experience – online platform promoting sustainable tourism in Upstate NY; Created a new trail system at my hometown's Marcy Town Park.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

Handing in my two week notice to leave the 'security' of my State job is by far one of my greatest career accomplishments. The position was having a negative impact on my mental health. Both my partner and I needed change. We wanted a new environment and jobs that gave us purpose. We invested our savings into building a Skoolie with the hopes of acquiring remote work or landing a job in Vermont or Maine. Shortly after handing in my two week notice with New York State, I interviewed for Barre Town's newly created Recreation Director position... and the rest is history! I am now in a career that provides me with purpose and meaningful interactions in my day to day. Now that I am in this career I desired, the road ahead will be paved with even greater accomplishments!

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR BIGGEST PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES?

My position with the NYSGC was a very toxic environment, for a number of reasons. Although difficult to manage at times, it taught me how to navigate big personalities, maintain professionalism, interact in a public facing role, deconstruct arguments, deescalate a situation, and persist with my individual

work habits regardless of toxic complacency among my coworkers.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE FROM LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED...

- Being a good listener can be a stronger trait than being a good conversationalist. People want to feel heard. Sometimes the best answer is silence.
- People will remember you more than anything by the way you make them feel. It is important to leave a good impression. The Golden Rule holds true and true; treat others the way you want to be treated. Or, my other Golden Rule: Community over Competition.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS YOU VALUE MOST AS A MEMBER OF VRPA?

As a relatively new member of VRPA I would say I value the monthly director's calls the most. The ability to have access and open communication with other's in my industry is unparalleled, in my opinion. I may be the only Full-Time recreation employee in Barre Town, but I feel like I have a team of reliable Director's at my disposal should I need information, insights, or advice. I am looking forward to taking advantage of the Training offered through VRPA as well. I have already registered for this year's CPSI Course! Next year I am budgeting for the PMT Course.

PERSONAL RECREATION INTERESTS.

My partner and I are weekend warriors. We love to plan day trips. Hiking, biking, roller skating, running... if its outside, chances are we have done it or we will try it! We enjoy chasing sunrises and sunsets, long days at the beach, exploring the history within a geographic region, and occasionally stopping for local cuisine. I love a Sunday drive on a scenic highway just as much as climbing a mountain. I have completed half of the Adirondack 46 High Peaks, in addition to visiting nearly one hundred waterfalls in New York State. If its competitive sport, well, I'd spend a whole day playing Spikeball, Corn Hole, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, Kan Jam, futbol, baseball/softball, football... if I'm invited, chances are I'll play any game.

FAMILY.

I am the middle child of three boys. Our parents named us to have incredibly catchy nicknames, although, it seemed to backfire and result in our names getting confused on more than one occasion: Billy, Johnny, Joey. I have a large extended family of cousins that are primarily older than me. Growing up, I was constantly interacting with my extended family. Every Summer we would spend time at my grandparent's house on the St. Lawrence River. I covet those memories. So much so that I dream of owning property and offering my extended family a similar opportunity that I was afforded growing up. ■



Vermont Senior Games

We are still working to confirm other events, including spring pickleball in Barre; tennis @ the Bridges in Warren; cycling and basketball in Castleton; and racquetball in coordination with the NH Senior Games. All dates and locations should be confirmed by the end of January. Go to www.vermontseniorgames.org for updates.

The 2023 National Senior Games are being held in Pittsburgh, PA on July 6-18th. We anticipate having close to 100 Vermont athletes participating in this year's National Senior Games. During the national games, daily performance updates will be available on the Vermont Senior Games website.

Finally, perhaps the Vermont Senior Games' most decorated athlete, Flo Meiler of Shelburne, was honored at the end of 2022 with one of her greatest accolades. Flo was named 2022 USATF Masters Track & Field Athlete of the Year. At age 87, Flo won 18 USATF national titles in 2022, and according to her recognition, "set a slew of American and world records." Flo will be among the Vermont athletes going to Pittsburgh for the Nationals in July.

Curious about how you can get more involved with the Vermont Senior Games? Contact the VSG Games Coordinator, George Moltz, at gwmoltz@gmail.com. ■



2023 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Vermont Senior Games Events Sub-Committee is well on its way to having the 2023 event schedule set. The event dates and locations below have been confirmed.

Competitions open to anyone 50+



Details/register: vermontseniorgames.org

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

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Trail Mix

The Gold Standard for Conservation & Recreation



By Ross Saxton and Phil Huffman



The Mad River Valley is well known for our incredible trails, paths, and outdoor recreation opportunities, and the dozens of organizations and people who manage these resources intend to keep making them better.

The beautiful settings in which hiking, skiing, biking, running, hunting, fishing, bird watching and more take place also provide essential habitats for our amazing Vermont wildlife and plants.

We share these natural spaces with diverse flora and fauna, from moose to grouse to brook trout to black bear, and from yellow birch to wild ginseng. But by sharing this space, some human activities put our wild neighbors at risk. As is human nature, we have been exploring and spreading out across the Valley

by building new trails and venturing deeper into backcountry terrain on foot, bike, and skis. We are setting out through untracked land at a faster pace in recent years than ever before. This expansion raises an important question; how do we set the Gold Standard for balancing state-of-the-art outdoor recreation and trails with protection of our priceless natural assets and enhancement of the health, economy, and environmental vitality of the region for the long-term future?

In recent years, the MRV Trails Collaborative provided the setting to initiate these collaborative discussions. And now, thanks to efforts by the Friends of the Mad River and several conservation, recreation,

and economic focused partners, our community has begun trying to achieve this Gold Standard. With funding from the same VOREC grant that is supporting the new trail hub and welcome center in Waitsfield and related enhancements, and the administrative commitment of the MRV Recreation District, a group of Valley residents has begun to define the structure, resources, information, process, and community engagement needed to determine how we can best balance outdoor recreation and ecological integrity here in the Mad River Valley.

The initiative, entitled MRV Conservation and Recreation Visioning, or CRV for short, began this summer among representatives of 15 different organizations in the Valley. The 15-person CRV Steering Committee (listed below), which is led by a three-person Leadership Team, set the footings for the effort with unanimously adopted founding documents and the formation of two key working groups: one focused on ecological integrity and conservation values, the other focused on outdoor recreation and trails. To help support and facilitate these efforts alongside the Leadership Team and Steering Committee, a well-qualified part-time Community Project Manager has been hired who is starting this week.

Over the next two years, the Steering Committee, two working groups, and the project manager will meet regularly to delve

deeply into the issues at hand and orchestrate an inclusive community-wide process to figure out that big question: how do we set the Gold Standard for balancing state-of-the-art outdoor recreation and trails, protecting priceless natural assets, and enhancing the Valley's health, economy, and environmental vitality for the long-term future.

The precise process to answer this question is still being developed, but there will definitely be a range of public participation opportunities through in-person and online forums, surveys, and more. We also expect additional technical expertise will be needed; for example, to create maps and help identify ecological priorities.

Many other communities around Vermont and the country are also wrestling with the interplay between outdoor recreation and ecological integrity, and we expect they will be eager to see what our Gold Standard looks like at the end of the next two years. What we are doing here is, in true MRV fashion, innovative and forward thinking. The task is challenging, but as a community with many skilled, motivated, and caring people who are passionate about both our incredible natural environment and outdoor recreation, we are confident that the end result of the CRV project will be meaningful.

Stay tuned for more information on this important project and opportunities to get involved. We look forward to your input! ■

CRV Steering Committee Members



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

Program Spotlight



LOCAL MOTION WINTER WALK TO SCHOOL

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

REQUEST YOUR WINTER WALK TO SCHOOL DAY KIT!

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

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

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

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

SPRING WALK & ROLL PROGRAM

Join us, as well, for our Spring Walk & Roll programming--we want to encourage active transportation in YOUR community, whether it's to school, to a local park, or to the post office! If your program wants to work with Local Motion on a fun winter or spring campaign, contact education@localmotion.org.

Red Cross

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Two Dates to pick from:

Wednesday, May 10th
1:30 - 3:00 pm
203 Country Club Rd. (former Elks Club)
Montpelier, VT 05602

Monday, June 5th
3:00 - 4:30 pm
171 Bridge Street
Hartford Parks & Recreation
White River Junction, VT 05001

REGISTER AT: WWW.VRPA.ORG

VRPA Annual Meeting

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



CEU SESSION

ARWIN TURNER:



10:00 - 11:15 am

The morning will feature a 70 minute CEU session with Arwin Turner from Come Alive Outside.

After the CEU session, join us for lunch, awards, and then a fun activity. More details to come!

[Register here!](#)

Annual Meeting & Awards

VRPA members gather each May to celebrate our accomplishments of the previous year, prepare for the summer's activities, and recognize some of the people who have made significant contributions to the association and to recreation across Vermont.

The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity to network with your recreation colleagues. Register to attend the meeting which includes lunch during the annual awards ceremony. We hope you will join us!

Nominate someone!

[Facility of Merit Award](#)

[Young Professional Award](#)

[Unsung Hero Award](#)

Send completed award nominations to Ally or Jess by April 1st
Avile@essex.org & Jessica@vrpa.org

'22-'23 VRPA Commercial & Organizational Members

A very big thank you to all our Commercial VRPA members as well as our supporting organizational members!

Go to the VRPA website and click on the "Commercial Members" tab for a direct link to each of our commercial member's websites. Please remember to support them with your business and be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment.

The VRPA could not do half of what we do without the ongoing support of our commercial members as well as our supporting organizational members.

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

Organizations

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





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Vendor Registration



80th Annual

VT CONFERENCE ON RECREATION & TRAILS SYMPOSIUM

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Exhibitor Brochure

This September 27th & 28th the VRPA will celebrate its 80th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation. What a milestone!

We hope that you will all join us in celebration this year as we are excited to announce a change in venue to the [Killington Grand Hotel](#) for the first time ever to help celebrate our 80th Conference! We also have a new partner this year, the Vermont Trails & Greenways Council (VTGC), who will be co-hosting the Trails Symposium in tandem with our conference! The Combination of this central location and new partner will help maintain our historic attendance and attract new attendees to a state of the art facility. VRPA thinks these changes will make this event even better for all participants and exhibitors alike.

Registration for exhibitors is now open! We encourage exhibitors to register early to save \$50 prior to May 31st. We also can only fit 35 vendors this year, so be sure to secure your space!

Registration for attendees will open later this Spring. We will be updating our website regularly with more updates and

information so be sure to check back often.

We have an amazing conference committee team this year that is working hard to make this year's conference stand out. Some of your favorite highlights will still be featured, including dinner & breakfast with exhibitors, Fireworks by Northstar Fireworks, Evening Social, Silent Auction, and some amazing education sessions from speakers around the country.

We hope to see you all this September to help celebrate our 80th conference! ▀

VRPA Conference Committee
& VRPA Executive Director



**Wed. & Thurs.,
September 27 & 28**

Killington Grand Hotel,
Killington, VT

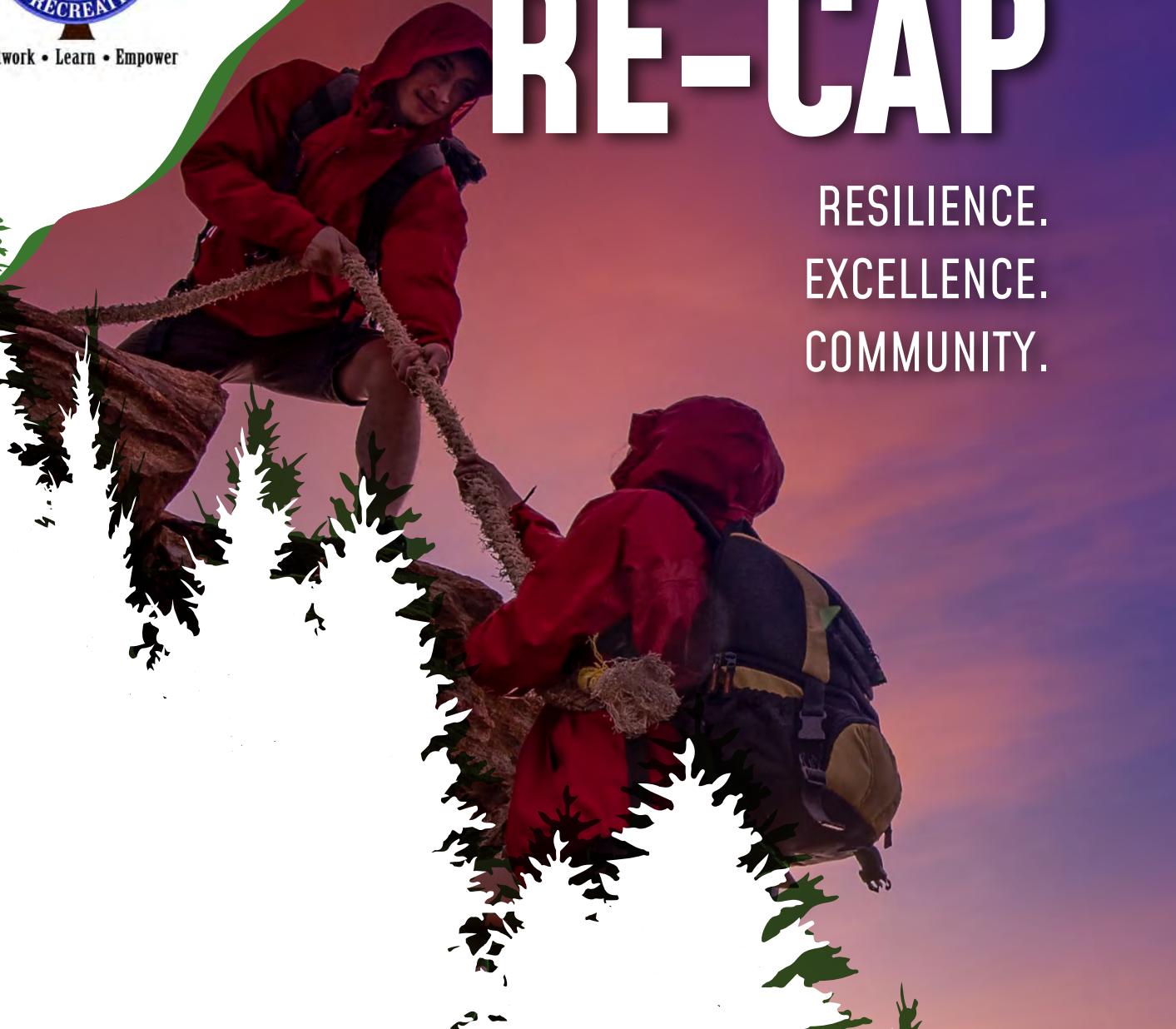
79th Annual Vermont
Conference on
Recreation



Network • Learn • Empower

RE-CAP

RESILIENCE.
EXCELLENCE.
COMMUNITY.



The 79th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation was held on October 12th & 13th, 2022 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.

It was great to have a “back to normal” year after the effects of the pandemic the two years prior. We were thrilled to see our registration numbers start to climb again to approx. 100 attendees and 28 Exhibitors.

We are grateful that Lake Morey Resort was able to provide us with delicious meals at a reduced rate even though the cost of food sky-rocketed this past year. There staff continue to be so

accommodating to our conference needs, and we were very thankful for their ongoing support.

We were also very fortunate this year to still attracted talented speakers from all over the country, including the states of Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Washington DC, Massachusetts, and several other states. Attendees also came from all over Vermont, including many small communities and rural towns. Perhaps one of the highlight of the conference was keynote Phil Gaines, a professor of practice in the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management Department at Clemson University. Phil gave a compelling, heartfelt, and inspirational keynote titled “Why be normal”, reminding us that the field of Parks & Recreation is special and unique because of all the services we offer and people we touch.

It was so great to see all of our supporting sponsors and exhibitors again as well during the Vendor Hall sessions. All of our exhibitors provided products to sample, information for guests, and great company. They also participated in several drawings of our raffle during the exhibit hall times. Thank you to all those that donate raffle items! During the Wednesday evening exhibit hall we were able to enjoy an open bar sponsored by Northstar Fireworks, who also provided a spectacular fireworks display over Lake Morey after dinner. Thank you so much to each of our exhibitors that took the time to join us again this past year for our conference. Your support is greatly appreciated! *Do you know of a vendor who should be at our conference who wasn't? Please contact the 2023 Conference Chair with your ideas!*

To honor Theresa S. Brungardt this year we were able to hold our traditional Brungardt Awards Ceremony during Thursday's luncheon. Three awards were handed out for: “Friend

Award”, “Organization Award”, & “Professional Award”. The Friend Award was given to Dick Pecor, long time volunteer in Colchester. The Organization Award was given to Ascutney Outdoors, a non-profit formed by West Windsor residents to help revive the abandoned Ascutney ski area. The Professional Award was given to Scott Hausler from the Hartford Parks & Recreation Department.

For our annual “Vermont's Finest Silent Auction” this year, we were able to offer it again through the online site “32 Auctions.” We were able to raise over \$6,000 in proceeds from over \$8,000 in silent auction donations. Thanks to the fine work of conference committee member and auction organizer Joanne Putzier of Burlington, as well committee members Betsy Terry, Sherry Winnie, & Maggie Leugers the auction was a smashing success. Thank you again to all of our amazing donors that contributed items to the Silent Auction!

The Vermont Conference on Recreation is an event that continues to grow, evolve and change, meeting the needs of contemporary recreation professionals while honoring and respecting the conference's origins, history and roots. Planning is already well underway for the 2023 conference. In our planning efforts, we will be keeping budgets and content in mind as many factors have changed through our journey since the pandemic. If you'd like to participate in the planning process or help at the conference itself, the planning committee can always use more volunteers. Contact Jessica Brodie, VRPA Executive Director at Jessica@vrpa.org if you are interested.

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

Sincerely,

2022 Conference Committee Members

Silent Auction Donors

On behalf of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association (VRPA) I would like to say THANK YOU VERY MUCH to all of the generous and supportive businesses and organizations from around Vermont that supported VRPA through our Annual Silent Auction that was held at our 79th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation.

Once again the participants of the Vermont's State Conference on Parks & Recreation were wowed by the overwhelming generosity of the Vermont businesses and non-profits that donated to our silent auction. You truly showed your care for others through your support and fit the title of one of "Vermont's Finest"!

Over \$8,000 in goods were donated to the Auction, allowing VRPA to raise just over \$6,000.00. The Auction is always a true highlight of the conference, and was again this year. We held the auction on the virtual platform, "32auctions.com", again this year to allow those not able to attend the conference in person a chance to still participate. Items were on display at the conference, but all voting was done online, which proved to be really successful.

The proceeds of the auction will be used for professional development and to continue offering many other educational opportunities for our members. As professionals in the field of parks and recreation, we hold the goal of improving the quality of life for Vermonters and visitors. Your contribution is helping to educate these professionals to reach our goal.

Thank you all again very much! We appreciate the generosity and support.

| | |
|---|--|
| Bistro de Margot | 2/\$50 Gift Certificates |
| Chef's Corner Café and Bakery | \$20 Gift Certificate |
| Jericho Tavern | \$25 Gift Certificate |
| McGillicudy's | Gift Card |
| Our House | 2/ \$50 Gift Certificates |
| Park Place Tavern | 2/\$50 Gift Certificates |
| The Kitchen Table Bistro | \$50 Gift Certificate |
| Homewood Suites | 2 Night Stay w/breakfast |
| Claussens | Gift Certificate |
| Common Deer | Canvas Bag/Backpack |
| The Dog and Cat | \$35 Gift Certificate |
| Hey June Stationery | Gift Basket/Notecards, Notebook, Pad, Jello Puzzle, Eraser pencil stand, Micro Tip Pens, Happy Camper Stickers |
| Leugers Fine Photography | School Bus Yellow |
| Lift VT | 1 Month Membership |
| Phoenix Book Store | Cookbook & Child book |
| NU Chocolat | Gift Certificate |
| Paquette Full of Posies | Gift Certificate |
| Rapunzel Salon | Hair Cut Gift Certificate |
| Seaway Car Wash | 10 Wash Pass |
| Snowflake Chocolates | 7 oz. Box of Assorted Chocolates |
| Strawberry Hill Sugarbush | Maple |
| Big Spruce | Gift Certificate |
| Hatchet | 4/\$25 Gift Certificates |
| Mirabelles | Gift Certificate |
| Papa Nicks | 2/Gift Certificates |
| Silver Palace | 3 Gift Certificates |
| Sweet Simone's | 2 Gift Certificates |
| Lamoille Valley Bike Tours | 2/ Half Day E-Bike Tour Pass |
| Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences | 2 One Day Passes |
| K.C.'S Bagel Cafe | 2/Gift Certificates |
| King Arthur Flour | Baking Bundle |
| VT Artisan Coffee & Tea Co | Gift Certificate |
| Burke Mountain Resort | 2 Lift Tickets |
| Lawsons Finest Liquids | Gift Card |
| Switchback Brewing Co. | Sign, Cup, Koozie, Key Chain, Hat |
| The Alchemist | T-Shirt, Hat, Socks, & Hot Sauce |
| Lake Morey Resort | 1 Night Gift Certificate |
| Montshire Museum of Science | 2 person certificate |
| Local Motion | Bike Rental for 2 |
| Ascutney Outdoors | A 2021-22 Season Pass |
| Brown Family Farms | Maple Syrup and Pancake Mix Gift Box |
| Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront | 2 Free Nights of Camping at North Beach Campground for the 2020 Season |
| Hotel Vermont | One Night Stay |
| North Beach Campground | Weekend stay in a Leanto |
| Prouty Beach Campground | Prouty Beach Camping Certificate |
| The North Star Lodge | Two One Night Stay |
| Top Notch Resort and Spa | 50 Minute Spa Service |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Audubon Vermont | Half Gallon Maple Syrup & AV |
| Euro Stickers | 4 Guest Passes and 2 Book 'Nature Friendly Garden and Touch a Butterfly' & \$10 Coupon to Gift Shop |
| Birds of Vermont Museum | Two Adult Lift Tickets for the 2021-22 Season |
| Bromley Mountain | Gift Basket you Put together |
| Cabot Creamery | 10x15 Secret Door Painting in Handmade Frame |
| Cathy Stevens Pratt | 4 Greens Fees |
| Cedar Knoll Country Club | Small Family Membership |
| ECHO Center | Assorted Gift Bag of Soap (12) |
| Elmore Mountain Farm Soap Works | Goat Milk |
| Farm Way Inc | Gift Certificate |
| Green Mountain National | 2- 2 Person Golf Rounds |
| Green's Sugarhouse | Gift Box of Maple Products |
| Halladay's Harvest Barn | Vermont in a Box/Dips and Seasonings |
| Kingdom Trails | 4x One Day Memberships |
| Lake Champlain Maritime Museum | Book, Hat, Magnet and Sticker |
| Laughing Moon Chocolates | \$25 Gift Card |
| Opulenza Sterling Silver Jewelry | Filigree Earrings |
| Petra Cliffs | Two Beginner Packages |
| Read Custom Soils | Hiking Travel Backpack, Men |
| Rocky Ridge Golf Club | Women Camping Daypack |
| Scott Terry | Outdoor, 2 Aloye Hiking |
| Shelburne Farms | Poles, VT State Parks 10 Passes |
| Shelburne Museum | Two Greens Fees |
| Sidehill Farm | Original Oil Painting |
| Skida Headware and Accessories | 1 Year Membership |
| Smugglers Notch | Family Day Pass Certificate |
| Spirit of Ethan Allen | 8 Pack of Jams |
| Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center | 3 Hats, Woman, Men, Baby |
| Sweet Clover Market | 1 2021/22 Bash Badge |
| The Quechee Club | 2 Tickets to the Scenic Narrated Cruise |
| Trader Joe's in South Burlington | \$75 Gift Certificate |
| Vermont Country Deli | \$50 Gift Certificate |
| Vermont Snowflakes | 1 Foursome of golf w/Carts |
| Vermont Sweetwater Bottling Co. | Bag of Goods |
| Waterbury Sports | Gift Card |
| Vermont Teddy Bear | 20" World's Softest Bear |
| VT Salt Cave Spa & Halotherapy Center | 2021 Framed Snowflake Print and Ornament |
| | One Case of Mixed Sodas |
| | 5 Punch Skate Sharpen |
| | Spa Day Package for Two |

2022 Exhibitors & Sponsors

Thank you very much to our conference exhibitors and sponsors. Please be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment.

We couldn't do half of what we do without their ongoing support.

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BCI Burke

Clivus New England, Inc.
Cousineau Forest Products

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VERMONT
Recreation & Parks Association

VRPA

2023 VT STATE PICKLEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

Finals - August 11-13 - Chittenden County

Regionals - June/July - locations in each region TBD

\$60

PER TEAM
PER CATEGORY

Registration - Opens 3/1/2023

Registration - Closes 5/15/2023

Cancellation deadline for refund - 6/1/2023

Register your team online at www.vrpa.org

Regions & Format:

North Region - Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden, Essex, Lamoille, Orleans, and Caledonia counties

South Region - Addison, Washington, Orange, Rutland, Windsor, Bennington, and Windham counties

Format - both Regionals and Finals to be a round robin format.

Age Groups - 18-34, 35-54, 55-69, 70+

- Age determined as of 1/1/2023
- Age group determined by the age of the younger player on each team

Playing Categories - Men's - Women's - Mixed

Playing Levels: Intermediate – Advanced

The playing level is determined by the highest rated player on the team.

Intermediate - 3.0 - 3.5 USAPickleball

Advanced - 3.75 - 4.0+ USAPickleball

Top 2 from each category advance to finals

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

Balls to be used - Franklin X-40
USPA Playing Rules

All proceeds from the State Tournament will benefit the VRPA, a 501c3 non-profit whose mission is to provide trainings and resources to support Parks & Recreation professionals throughout the state of Vermont.



www.vrpa.org

VERMONT
Recreation & Parks Association

Summerama Camp Staff Training

Friday, June 16, 2023
8am–4pm
Robert Miller Community Center
Burlington, VT

Cost:
\$30/person - VRPA members
\$25/person - more than 10 people

MORE INFO

Vermont Afterschool

BURLINGTON PARKS RECREATION WATERFRONT VERMONT

A TRAIL MAP TO OUR FUTURE
Together toward success

For over 40 years, the Vermont Parks & Recreation Association has hosted Summerama, a camp-specific training program for new and seasoned counselors and recreation staff.

The purpose of this workshop is to supplement in-house staff orientations with a robust schedule of hands-on education sessions lead by regional camp professionals. Summerama is the first step toward training your staff and initiating a strong team bond that'll pull through the season.

Bring your training to the next level!

The Summerama schedule includes sessions covering a wide variety of camp topics. With a mix of interactive and informational, long and short time blocks, and material suited for all levels of experience. Every member of your staff can customize their training with selections that pique their interest.

A detailed brochure will be available in April with the complete schedule outlined. Attendee registration will open by that time as well. ■

Cost:

\$30/person - VRPA members
\$25/person - more than 10 people

MORE INFO



A TRAIL MAP TO OUR FUTURE
Together toward success

2023 VT Maintenance Workshop



**Tues.
June 6
Middlebury**



REGISTRATION

VENDOR INFO

The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association (VRPA), in partnership with the New England Sports Turf Managers Association (NESTMA), and the New England Park Association (NEPA) invite you to attend the 2023 VT Maintenance Workshop.

The entire morning is dedicated to hands-on educational sessions, site visits, vendors and equipment demos.

After the morning sessions we will break for lunch followed by several roundtable discussions. Meet people from around the region who work in park and school settings. Attendees will walk away with specific resources and tools to apply within your organization and community.

New in 2023, we will be hosting the





VRPA /ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STATE TRACK MEET

JULY 22, 2023

ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY

1000 MAIN STREET
ST. JOHNSBURY, VT

WWW.VRPA.COM



EVENT DETAILS

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

[Complete the commitment form today!](#)



Save the date!

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



ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STATE TRACK & FIELD MEET

The VRPA/St. Johnsbury 2023 State Meet will take place on Saturday, July 22, 2023 at St. Johnsbury Academy.

2023 COST

- \$15 per person (VRPA Member organizations)
- \$18 per person (Non-member, per registered participant)

ATHLETES AGES

The athlete's age group is determined by his/her age as of December 31, 2023. Athletes aged 7-15 on December 31, 2023 are eligible to participate in the meet this year. If the athlete was a freshman in high school during the current 2022-23 school year then they are not allowed to compete.



PAYMENT

Invoices will be sent to each team at the conclusion of the meet once the total amount of athletes has been collected from you prior to June 16th, 2023. This commitment form helps us prepare for the amount of ribbons and shirts we need to order, and the number of athletes to expect. Please provide accurate athlete numbers to avoid extra costs associated with ribbons



and t-shirt's that we order. Every participant in the meet will receive a shirt and the top 6 athletes in each event will get a ribbon handed out at the conclusion of each event the day of the meet. Please complete [this commitment form](#) by June 16th, 2023. ■

@vermontrecandparks 802-952-0030

vrpa.org



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National Recreation
and Park Association



www.nrpa.org/CPRP

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| Weddings | Fairs |
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| Graduations | Fishing Derbies |
| Concerts | Independence Day |
| Family Reunions | Barbeques |
| Sporting Events | Drive-Ins |
| Old Home Days | Guy Fawkes Day |
| Back To School | Diwali |
| Homecomings | Corn Mazes |

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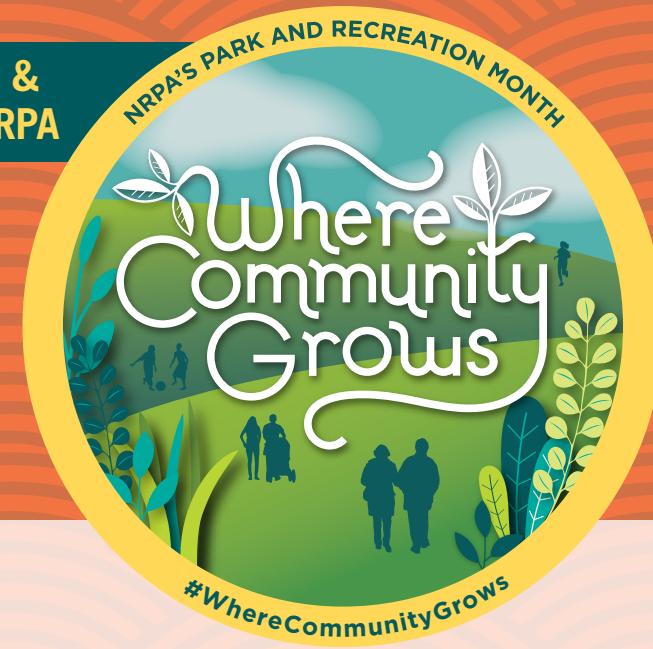
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Burlington Bay, Independence Day Celebration

July Parks & Rec Month &
Fundraising Raffle for VRPA



Each year in July, Parks & Recreation month is celebrated across the country.

The promotion and theme each year are led by the National Recreation & Park Association, which is comprised of thousands of parks & recreation professionals in every state.

This year we will celebrate the vital role park & recreation professionals play in bringing people together, providing essential services and fostering the growth of our communities. As park and recreation professionals, you make a positive impact on the lives of your community members every single day. Let's come together this year and show the world just how much parks and recreation means to our communities.

We can't wait to celebrate "Where Community Grows" with you!

There's no better way to celebrate Park and Recreation Month than by highlighting the people who faithfully serve their communities all year long.

To celebrate & continue to help serve the Parks & Recreation professionals statewide, the VRPA has teamed up with several agencies & businesses to offer a **new VRPA fundraising raffle drawing that will take place on Thursday, July 27th.**

**All you have to do qualify is
donate a minimum of \$25 to the VRPA before July 21st!**

We will draw raffle winners from our list of VRPA donors on Thursday, July 27th

Donate Today!



www.nrpa.org/july

MERRELL

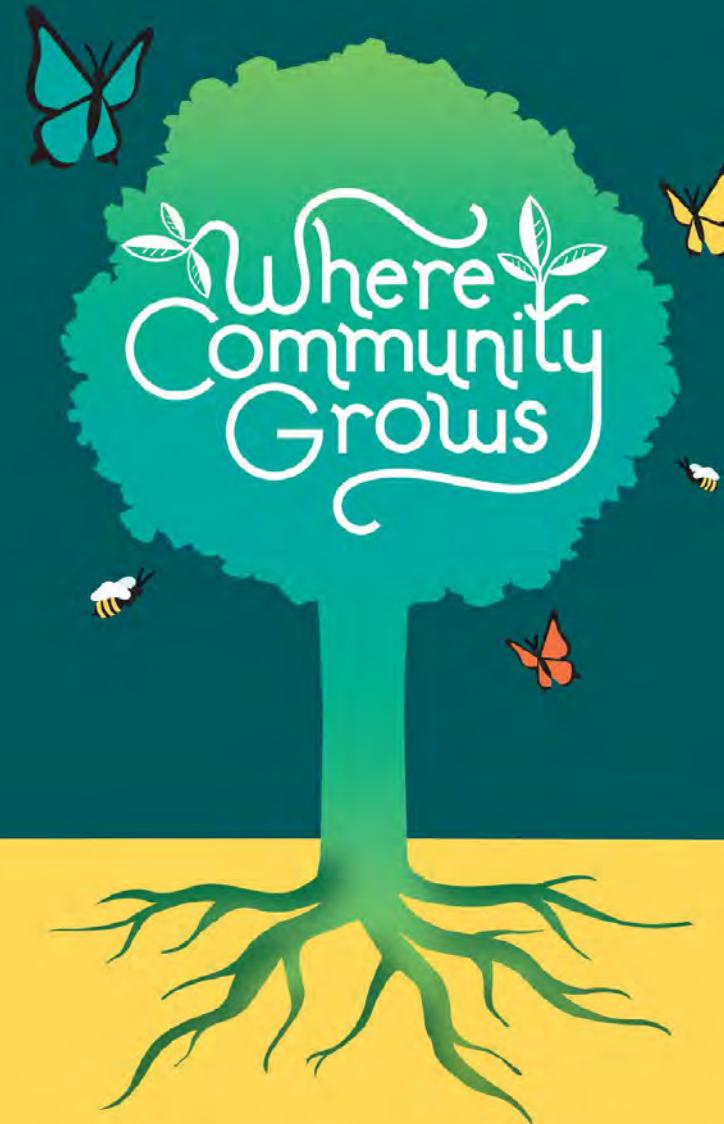
ACTIVE
network

Bobcat

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



NRPA National Conference



OCTOBER 10-12, 2023

DALLAS

**REGISTRATION OPENS
MAY 8, 2023**

 nrpa.org/conference

VPRA Advocate | Issue 102 | Annual 2023



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



As park and recreation professionals, we are privileged to be the stewards of taxpayer dollars. Each and every day we get to spend their money. What a responsibility!

We hold in our hands the power to impact communities by how we manage these resources. How we spend, how we generate revenues, and how we work to create a financially sustainable future for our organizations and for the field of parks and recreation.

[Register HERE](#)

Want more info? info@110percent.net or 720.304.2167

"Inspiring, transformative, and even a bit provocative (in a good way) – this is not your average training! If you want to challenge yourself and connect with other amazing pros, you don't want to miss this opportunity. Thanks for another fantastic program!"

Karen O'Donnell, Director
Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation

WHEN: November 13th-15th, 2023

LOCATION: Concord Recreation Center
14 Canterbury Road, Concord, NH 03301

PRICE: \$350 1.5 CEUs are available



NH Recreation & Park Association
Get out and enjoy life!

The New Hampshire Park & Recreation Association is proud to work alongside the host sponsors listed to provide this important program for our members.

Jamie Sabbach, Program Instructor
Jamie has spent her entire adult life serving the public park and recreation profession. Afforded opportunities few will ever have, she has been a practitioner, an educator, and consultant. She speaks from a place of experience, realism, and observation.



Jamie has taught hundreds of professional development and training programs across North America and Europe and has had the privilege of testifying in front of the United States Congress on the critical importance of public lands and recreation.

She currently works alongside organizations from coast to coast assisting them in creating financially sustainable service models for their communities. She also teaches financial management at Indiana University in the School of Public Health's masters program.

Supporting HOST Sponsors

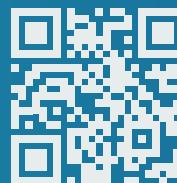




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APPLICATION & ANNUAL RENEWAL

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

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

As a VRPA member, you will receive:

- Recreation Check-in: Weekly info & happenings, via email.
- The Advocate: Annual digital VRPA newsletter
- VRPA Membership Directory: Annual digital directory of member contact info.
- Discounted Fees: Conferences, workshops & event registration fees & advertising rates.
- Professional Assistance: In person & online.
- VRPA website: Access the VRPA website at vrpa.org.

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| NAME | TITLE |
| <hr/> | |
| ORGANIZATION | |
| <hr/> | |
| STREET ADDRESS | CITY |
| <hr/> | |
| OFFICE PHONE | STATE |
| <hr/> | |
| CELL PHONE | |
| <hr/> | |
| EMAIL | |
| <hr/> | |

CLASSIFICATION

(See next page for classification descriptions)

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

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

Check enclosed Payment being mailed

Total amount due \$ _____

New memberships received in the months of Nov, Dec and Jan are half price. New memberships received in the last three months of our fiscal year (Feb, March and April) are full price and include the following year membership also.

MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

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

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

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

Are you a member of NRPA? No Yes



ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

ISSUE 102 | ANNUAL 2023