



ISSUE 99 | WINTER 2022

ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

In this Issue:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| VRPA Calendar | 2 |
| Message from Executive Director | 4-5 |
| Personal Profile | 6-7 |
| Around The State | 8-16 |
| Facility Feature | 18 |
| Program Spotlight | 20 |
| 2021 VRPA Conference Recap | 22-25 |
| 2022 Conference Save the Date | 26 |
| State Track Meet | 27 |
| Summerama | 32 |
| VT Maintenance Workshop | 33 |
| CPO | 34-35 |
| Renewal Application | 42 |

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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: May 13, 2022
Send to: Jessica@vrpa.org or by mail to: VRPA, PO Box 33 Brownsville, VT, 05037



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2022

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| March 9 | VRPA Quarterly Meeting |
| March 22 & 23 | CPO Course |
| May 11 | VRPA Annual Meeting & Awards |
| June 2 | VT Maintenance Workshop |
| June 17 | Summerama Camp Staff Training |
| June 2022 | Aquatic Risk Management Course |
| July 23 | VRPA / St. Johnsbury State Track Meet |
| September 20-22 | NRPA Annual Conference |
| October 12 & 13 | VRPA Annual Conference |

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

Mission

The mission of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is to provide training and resources to help Vermonters to “Create Community through People, Parks and Programs.”



VRPA PRESIDENT'S *Perspective*

A Few Final Words as VRPA President

Happy 2022 VRPA!

I'm thankful. I'm thankful for this community of professionals who always seem to be there when anyone needs help or guidance. It doesn't matter how long you've been in your job or this career, everyone needs a resource along the way and so many of you have been there for me and others to lean on during these last two years.

This organization is determined to find the positives too. You have all taken turns finding the light at the end of the tunnel; and although the tunnel is persistent with its twists and turns where the light dims, the optimism of coming out of the darkness continues.

I also appreciate that society is starting to recognize and support those who struggle – whether it is every now and then or when someone's smile and energy have faded for too long. The call for help is more allowable now than it has ever been. We are still learning how to support and uplift those who are struggling. In my own experience, asking for help didn't have the outcome I had expected, but it is a learning experience for myself as well. Learning how to ask for help is something I am still working on as it will benefit more than just myself in the end. It has been hurtful and

exhausting but I know things will brighten as I come out of this dip in the tunnel.

Looking back, one of my last “perspectives” was along a similar theme of being thankful. It comes in different shapes, sizes, and emotions. It also comes with different support pillars based on what you need or what is needed from you. Melissa, Betsy, Jess and Mark...just to name a few of you who have stood strong for me to lean on during the last two years of learning and growth. Thank you for being there for me. There is something about being around you and other VRPA members that create the sense of family.

Thank you for allowing me to be your VRPA President these last two years. I am excited to see and be a part of everything Rob and the rest of the Executive Board have in store for VRPA. I am impressed and motivated by all of you and appreciate the trust and friendship the Board has given me.

Sincerely,
Ally Vile
Ally Vile, CPRP
VRPA President

Message

from the Executive Director



KEEP MOVING FORWARD

Here we are in 2022. As I write this I am wondering what happened to 2021 and even 2020. I think we can all agree that the past two years have been a little bit of a blur, but let's focus on the positives. In the past year we have become more creative, flexible, & understanding as a population in general. Sure, we are all tired, a little bruised, and just sick of learning new variant names, but think about the new things we have learned and tried this past year. 2021 was a year that allowed all of us a chance to reconnect with loved ones and friends after time apart. It gave us grace in respecting co-workers needs when sick or tired. It forced us to think in new ways and learn new skills. Just think about if the pandemic never happened and all the old ways of doing things that would still be in place. Change can be hard and scary, but often we all need a little push to make big changes that lead to future growth.

Over the past year it has been so terrific to get to know so many of you better and see the amazing work you have done in your communities. Together, we have discussed new management procedures, mental health impacts from the pandemic, racial justice and equality, as well as an unstable financial future. Through all of these changes and challenges, you all not only continued to serve your communities through your core services, but you also took on new roles to make sure people continue to have access to food, childcare, healthcare, and other critical resources. You have continued to find new ways to allow the public to access you indoor & outdoor spaces, and have gotten creative with programming, learning new ways to reach those that you serve.

As I look back on 2021, I see an amazing group of creative, passionate, and hard-working professionals ready to crush the new year ahead. As you start your journey into 2022 be sure to stay positive and keep moving forward. Stay structured enough for success but remain flexible enough for fun and creativity.

As I reflect personally on the past year, just like for many of you, it has certainly seen its' highs and lows. My family and I have continued to explore all the great outdoor adventures that Vermont has to offer, and I can't wait to connect with more of you in person in the year ahead. My family did have a few more broken bones this year again (it's seriously becoming a bad joke at this point!), but all are healed and better now – thankfully! We continue to juggle the never

ending balance of work and childcare like so many, but are trying not to blink too fast as time continues to race by. My son is now 7 and our twin girls are 4. I think about how my son has only experienced school life for a total of 5 months not in a mask, and how the pandemic has been around for more than half of my girl's life. It is impossible to know the long term effects and thoughts our kids will have from being raised in a pandemic era, but I do know they are constantly watching and learning from us, so forward is the direction we must move, and there is no place better for that than in our parks and programs.

More than ever we are all relying on the work that you all do as parks & recreation professionals. Thank you for continuing to show up and serve your communities with limited staff, limited resources, and limited time. Thank you for maintaining our parks, providing summer camps & programs, and offering seasonal events to help bring us all back together in new ways. It has truly made all the difference and you have all done an amazing job!

Thank you also to everyone that has supported the VRPA this past year. To all of our commercial members and vendors that joined us at our annual state conference. To those that have sponsored and advertised with us. And to all those that have volunteered time to support our efforts in a variety of ways. Your involvement and support is truly appreciate, thank you!

In the next few months ahead, the VRPA has many great meetings and trainings coming up and I hope that all of you are able to participate in some of them! I would like to thank all our 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. It is amazing to see all the talented and hard working professionals come together to do great things – keep up the amazing work everyone and I look forward to seeing you all soon! ■

Sincerely,
Jessica Brodie
Jessica Brodie
Executive Director

“If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

Laura Arnesen

Executive Director of the Mad River Valley Recreation District



What influenced your decision to choose the career you did?

I have always loved to exercise and be outdoors. In fact, while at Wake Forest University in NC, I took so many PE courses they stopped counting for credit! I tried every sport I could and learned to appreciate new activities. And more recently, while raising my kids in the Mad River Valley, they played 3 sports each year. It was a lot of driving, but kept our family close and watching my kids play sports was delightful.

Career positions held.

In addition to my love for exercise I also love to travel. I was a Flight Attendant for 10 years then worked for a textbook publisher in sales and management in the Boston area. Then I worked at a start up company in financial services and became very resourceful in getting things done on a tight budget. We moved to Vermont as we started a family and my husband travelled a lot so I started my own consulting business to have more control over my schedule. I focused on helping non-profits with fundraising and marketing. At one point I did a job share as the Ex. Director of the Catamount Trail and later did projects for Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice, the Mad River Path, the Vermont Land Trust and many other small businesses and non-profits. When the Mad River Valley Recreation District advertised for their staff person I felt like it would be a good fit with my skills and interests.

What do you consider your greatest career accomplishments?

I have raised the funds for two non-profits to have permanent homes: the Mad River Valley Ambulance in Waitsfield and The Family Center of Washington County in Montpelier. While raising millions of dollars is not easy, when you drive by a building that you helped make possible it's a great feeling.

Through the years I have helped many non-profits increase membership, raise awareness and raise money.

What have been your biggest professional challenges?

I find it difficult to work with people who come into a discussion or project with their minds made up. Staying open to new ideas and being creative is so important. If you listen closely and ask the right questions you end up with a better result and often the compromise is even better than the original vision.

Professional advice from lessons you have learned...

Work with people you like and respect and make sure they are smart. It makes all the difference. As things change, which they always do. Or when you have a misunderstanding or make a mistake, as will happen from time to time, since we are all human, you have trust and goodwill to fall back on. Give people credit for their good ideas and thank them for their help. As a staff person working with volunteers you need to put things in perspective - this is your job, they are volunteering their time - be patient and appreciative of what they add to your organization.

What are some of the benefits you value most as a member of VRPA?

As the first staff person for the Mad River Valley Recreation District I have benefitted mightily from networking with other VRPA professionals either on monthly phone calls, their resources on-line or the VRPA Annual Conference. One of the first things I did when I stated my job October 1, 2020 was attend the VRPA virtual annual meeting. It really kicked off my "training" and made me feel like part of an important group. Starting a job during a pandemic isn't easy, but being part of VRPA really helped. BTW: In 2021 I attended the VRPA Annual Meeting at Lake Morey

and had a blast! It's a beautiful place and the conference had valuable workshops, fun activities (think yoga and taking a canoe out on a break), great food and plenty of networking opportunities.

Personal Recreation Interests.

I love to swim, walk my dog, ride bikes, snowshoe, ski and take group exercise classes when they are available. I live in Warren and there are fabulous trails all around us as well as beautiful places to get in the water - Blueberry Lake and multiple swim holes along the Mad River.

Family

My husband and I moved from Boston in 1993 to build a house and raise our family in Warren. Having nature as a big part of our kids' world growing up was terrific. They skied in the Warren Elementary School program, went to Warren Falls in the summer, played youth sports and each were on State Championship Teams at Harwood during their high school years. Our grown children now live in Boston and Dallas and we hold down the family homestead that backs up to the National Forest with our pandemic puppy, Harper, a Bernadoodle.

Anything else?

The thing I am most proud about from my first year as Executive Director of the Mad River Valley Recreation District is working with the UVM Medical School's program for \$10 bike helmets. They subsidize helmets since they want to prevent brain trauma. I set up at the Waitsfield Farmer's Market on two Saturdays and sold 113 helmets! I love that people are staying safe while they have fun biking. I heard about the opportunity on a VRPA Director's call and it was so well received by our community! ■

WINTER SWIMMING Festival

The Memphremagog Winter Swimming Festival is “filled to the gills.” On February 26 and 27, 2022, 135 winter swimmers will be descending on Newport to spend two days swimming 25 to 200-meter events in a two-lane, 25-meter pool cut in the ice of Lake Memphremagog at The EastSide Restaurant. While winter swimming is widespread and popular in Europe, Newport’s pool is the only 25-meter competitive winter swimming pool cut in the ice in all of the Americas.

The first Festival was held in 2015 with 41 “Pioneers.” It has been held every year since then with the exception of last year, when we went “virtual.” We’re back this year. Every swimmer and every volunteer is required to be fully vaccinated AND boosted. This year’s Roster includes swimmers from Alaska, California, Oregon, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Georgia, South Carolina, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Florida, Maryland, Virginia, DC, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Ireland with a growing group of Vermonters. There are 35 volunteers and staff. Here’s the [Roster](#).

This year the winter swim will be held on the same weekend as Newport’s Winter Fest. Spectators are welcome. The swim festival kicks off at 9:30 am on Saturday morning with a fiercely competitive and joyous Hat Competition. With events continuing throughout Saturday and again on Sunday.

Friday evening, as swimmers hit town, they spread out to local restaurants. On Saturday afternoon, after the first day of swimming, Barr Hill at Caledonia Spirits teams up with the EastSide to host a Jammie and Vodka Shooter Party, followed by our Award Ceremony and a Swimmers and Volunteers buffet dinner by Dena and crew at the EastSide. Here’s the [Schedule of Events](#)

Because of the growth of the sport and the presence of 40 winter swimmers on this year’s waiting list, the Festival Organizing Committee will be looking to expand the Festival with an additional day of swimming in 2023

The swim is organized and hosted by Kingdom Games and the Memphremagog Winter Swimming Society. Kingdom Games now hosts over 30 days of open water swimming, running, biking and winter swimming events throughout the year.

Here are some [pictures](#) of the Festival from previous years and a You Tube” [Memphremagog Winter Swim Festival](#). ■



Around the State



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10 KM - 5 KM - 1 Mile

Hosted by Kingdom Games and the Northeast Kingdom Open Water Swimming Association

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VT SENIOR GAMES



The Vermont Senior Games ended up hosting a record 599 athletes over the ten events staged in 2021. A few sports were cancelled at the end of the competition year due to COVID concerns, but overall, it was a fantastic year for the VSG.

Three events in September were held since our last report to you in the fall newsletter.

The 5K road race was held over Labor Day weekend in partnership with the Northfield Savings Bank and the Central Vermont Runners. 47 Senior Games athletes ran the 3.1-mile course, and as was the case with the 10K back in June, the times were incredible. Five senior runners bested the 20-minute mark. All of the athletes who participated qualified for the National Senior Games in 2022.

One of the most anticipated events on the 2021 games schedule was cycling. As recently as 2013, 68 athletes participated in Vermont Senior Games cycling. However, due to a variety of circumstances, no cycling event was staged in 2020, 2019, or 2017, and a mere 13 athletes rode in 2018 (in an event held in Maine with our partners there).

Thus, when experienced cycling event organizer Andy Weinberg approached us in 2019 about bringing the races back to Vermont, potentially at Castleton University, we were excited to work with him. It took two long years, and a few growing pains, but it was well worth the effort. We think that after this year's inaugural event, cycling could become one of our biggest sports in the future.

For context, there are technically four cycling races sponsored by the National Senior Games: the 5K and 10K time trials, and 20K and 40K road races. We quickly concluded that trying to stage four races at our first cycling event would be too much, especially since athletes who qualify for Nationals in one time trial automatically are approved for the other one. The same rule holds true with the road races.

As a result, VSG offered athletes a 5K time trial at our event, and we requested a waiver from the NSGA to hold a 20-mile road race, a compromise between the 20K and 40K distance. Our proposal was approved, and Andy devised an absolutely breathtaking, challenging course out from Castleton, looping up to the Hubbardton Battlefield, and back to the campus.

One of our challenges for this event was reaching out to the athletes, as we had only a tiny database of contacts to communicate with. Registrations came in very slowly, but in the end, we managed to get 27 cyclists to sign up.

Both races were tremendously successful, particularly the road race, with fast times and exceptionally enthusiastic athletes. And, perhaps best of all, virtually no automobile traffic!

Racers provided a great deal of insightful feedback regarding the event that will help the VSG improve the experience going forward. We are very much looking forward to returning to Castleton for cycling next September!

Finally, our last – and only indoor – event of the year was the annual 3 – on – 3 basketball tournament, also hosted at Castleton University. It's a unique event to organize in that it is our only team sport other than the doubles in the racquet sports, and almost all the athletes are from out-of-state. Basketball always features the lowest percentage of Vermont participants each year. Staging the event requires portable clocks, referees, multiple volunteers, court preparation, lunch arrangements, and simply registering all the players is difficult since team rosters are in flux literally until the day of the event. That proved to be particularly true this fall as COVID started ramping up again around this time.

We worked with Castleton to honor the school's protocols, which at the time permitted vaccinated athletes to compete without masks, while others could play if masked. For most of the 70 athletes who participated, it was the first time they had to provide proof of vaccination. Nevertheless, the VSG was pleased

with the turnout, and we witnessed some rather feisty games as several age brackets were seriously competitive.

As the year ends, the Vermont Senior Games team is busy planning for the 2022 season, setting dates and securing venues for our upcoming events. Currently athletes who have qualified for the 2022 National Senior Games in Florida are in the midst of deciding whether to commit to that competition with COVID uncertainties still such a factor. Those games are scheduled for May, interesting in that it has traditionally been a summer event. Moreover, 2022 will be yet another qualifying year for the 2023 Nationals in Pittsburgh, as Senior Games endeavors to return to more 'normal' operations.

The first Vermont Senior Games event of 2022 will be the 10K run, in partnership with the Central Vermont Runners' "Capital City Stampede" on Saturday June 11. The second Barbara Jordan Track and Field Championships will be the very next weekend, at Burlington High School.

The full schedule of 2022 Vermont Senior Games events will be available by early April. We would very much appreciate you Vermont parks and recreation professionals spreading the word to the folks in your community who are age 50 and older. The VSG motto is fun, fitness, and fellowship, so no need to be a standout athlete... all levels of competitors are encouraged to participate.

Keep an eye on www.vermontseniorgames.org for sneak previews as the 2022 schedule of events evolves. Thanks in advance for helping us to increase our number of competitors towards our goal of 1,000 athletes in 2022. ■



VERMONT ADAPTIVE *Ski & Sports*

Opens its New \$2.5 Million Adaptive Sports Facility at Mt. Ellen at Sugarbush

New Home for Vermont Adaptive showcases a new program room for adaptive sports, quiet space, technical equipment room, accessible bathrooms, an elevator and more



Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports opened the doors to its second permanent home in Vermont, Murphy's Annex at Vermont Adaptive – Mt. Ellen, Sugarbush in December, and year-round programming (which started with skiing and snowboarding) began December 26. All ages and abilities are welcome to recreate and enjoy adaptive sports with Vermont Adaptive regardless of ability to pay.

Vermont Adaptive is the largest non-profit organization in Vermont to offer daily, year-round adaptive sports programs throughout the state to people with disabilities. For more than 20 years, the organization has partnered with Sugarbush Resort at Mt. Ellen, using 400 sq. ft. of borrowed space in the Mt. Ellen base lodge to operate its programs. The new 4,000 sq. ft. facility has been in the making for about three years and was scheduled to open last winter. Due to the pandemic, officials weren't able to break ground until this past spring.

"The outpouring of support for creating this facility has been amazing," said Erin Fernandez, executive director of Vermont Adaptive. "We can't even begin to thank everyone who has been involved in the project. We have not quite reached our fundraising goal yet and still need help and donations, but we are making progress on the last \$250,000 every day. Most importantly, though, it's the athletes and participants who will benefit from that generosity and support. Sports and recreation are for every body. This building symbolizes that and will provide a training outlet and playground for those athletes to pursue their dreams, whatever those may be, on a year-round basis."

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

- Access for All Elevator for three floors at Mt. Ellen at Sugarbush.
- Year-round storage for expensive state-of-the-art adaptive equipment.
- Bag and gear storage space for staff, volunteers and guests.
- Connecting pathways to existing and new spaces – connection to Sugarbush's main base lodge level for food, the fireplace, seating, and retail.
- Accessible entryways and exits for getting ready for and hitting the slopes.
- Dedicated space for program check-in, accessible restrooms, program space, personal storage and

changing space, volunteer break room, educational lending library, and more.

- Specially-designed soundproof sensory room for those who need a comfortable retreat away from noise and overstimulation.
- Multi-purpose space for classroom activities, retreats, yoga workshops, wellness camps, and other holistic activities.
- Space to work on equipment with a mechanical equipment closet included.

The new facility is specifically designed with the Vermont Adaptive participants, volunteers, staff, and community in mind in order to bring year-round accessible sports and recreation to the entire Mad River Valley area.

The facility at Mt. Ellen is the second of three phases of Vermont Adaptive's Permanent Homes Campaign. The first building, the Andrea Mead Lawrence Lodge at Pico Mountain, was built in 2013. The Pico facility was the first of its kind in Vermont. The third building will be located somewhere on the Burlington waterfront adjacent to the bike path; the specific site is still to be determined.

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

Approximately \$250,000 still needs to be raised to complete the fundraising aspect of the \$2.5 million project. All donations and pledges made before Dec. 31 will be recognized on the exterior donor wall plaques at the entrance to the building. Leadership donations of \$500, \$1,000 or more also will be recognized with individual plaques in the donor lobby on the second floor of the lodge. ■

To learn more about the facility, to view designs and renderings or to make a donation, visit [here](#).

Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports is a nationally recognized organization that empowers people of all abilities through inclusive sports and recreational programming regardless of ability to pay. For more information, click [here](#).

Vermont Let's Go Fishing Fishing Program



Hartford Parks & Recreation Receives Outstanding Partner Award

The Vermont Let's Go Fishing Program's Outstanding Partner was recently presented to Hartford Parks & Recreation, Jay McDonough who is the Department's Superintendent of Recreation Programs. Jay is a Volunteer Let's Go Fishing Instructor and leads the programming opportunities for the Town. The award highlighted Hartford Parks & Recreation and Jay's efforts in enthusiastically ensuring the Hartford community has ample opportunities to learn about fishing whether it is open water, fly fishing or ice fishing. ■

Pictured left to right, Corey Hart, Education Specialist for Vermont Let's Go Fishing Program and Jay McDonough, Superintendent of Recreation Programs for the Town of Hartford Parks & Recreation.



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MENTEES:

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- Be willing to commit time (typically two hours per month)

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INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS visit aapra.org/Programs/Mentorship-Program





New Outdoor

Aquatic

Facility Near Completion

Scott Hausler, Hartford Parks & Recreation Director

A 2019 Town of Hartford Bond Vote rubber stamped a capital improvement project to construct a new outdoor aquatic facility in the Town of Hartford. The facility is near completion.

The 2021 Capital Improvement Project for the Town of Hartford includes the demolition of the existing Sherman Manning Pool and reconstructing a swimming pool, splash pad and control building.

The new outdoor aquatic facility is scheduled to open in June of 2022. The project includes a new layout with zero depth entry along with lap lanes, slides and multiple shade features offering enhanced amenities for a more complete family-oriented facility. More greenspace along with a new control building housing an office and family changing rooms will greet patrons as they enter. The new gateway into the athletic complex at Hartford High School will be part of the entry that greets visitors. The control building will have a collaborative use and be utilized in the off season for ticket sales for Hartford High School Athletic Events.

Project planning began in May of 2018 with the formation of The Hartford Pool Advisory Committee. A Selectboard Appointed Committee charged with determining the need

to reopen, restore, renovate or build a new municipal pool. Weston & Sampson Engineering was retained soon after to complete a Pool Assessment and assist the Advisory Committee in determining location, preliminary design and need based on several community wide surveys. Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype guided the Advisory Committee through final design and cost estimating. Following the successful bond vote in 2019 the project was put out to bid and soon after put on hold due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. In 2020, through a competitive bid process, Bread Loaf Construction was selected to bring the project to final design and construct the new aquatic facility for a not to exceed project amount of \$3,177,000 dollars. South Shore Gunite is the subcontractor for the pool.

Work will continue through the month of December with the completion of the control building and installation of pump house equipment which experienced major delays due product availability. Construction will start back up in the spring with completion of the deck areas and installation of tile and plaster. The Department plans to open the new aquatic facility for a full season of operation this coming June. ■

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Program Spotlight



PATIENT _____
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Parks Prescription Program

Connects Vermonters With The Outdoors



By Rob Peterson

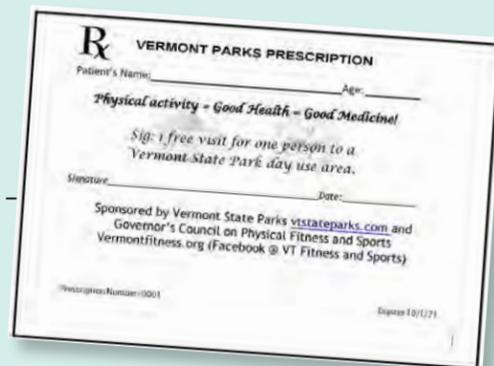
Vermont State Parks and The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports continued their ongoing partnership this year to encourage Vermonters to reap the many benefits of getting outdoors. The virtues of outdoor physical activities are broad and significant, from reducing inflammation, improving mood and lowering blood pressure to improving quality of sleep and burning extra calories. The partnership, aimed at improving awareness of these significant health values, connects physicians and their offices with state parks to improve health outcomes and quality of life. Through the program, patients receive "parks prescriptions" from their doctors, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners. Prescription recipients, in turn, gain free day-use entry into state parks when they provide the prescription to park staff upon park entry.

For the past seven years, the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation has promoted the program. In 2021 alone, the program distributed over 12,000 prescriptions to physicians' offices with over two hundred health care professionals involved in their distribution. This collaborative effort each year has opened the door to meaningful conversations between patients and their health care professionals about physical activity and health, according to council chair, Janet Franz. "By providing these passes to medical providers to give to their patients, we

help integrate the routine assessment and promotion of physical activity into clinical care. After all, exercise is medicine!", said Franz.

The partnership between the two organizations remains strong and hundreds of prescriptions were turned in at state parks this season. Council member, Dr. David Butsch, knows the value of these doctors' office conversations first-hand from years of talking with patients. "The great value of this program has been that it targets physicians and their offices and allows them a wonderful way to encourage patients to take charge of their lives and their health and to connect with the wonderful outdoors of Vermont. The program has been extremely successful and helpful for physicians in initiating conversations with their patients. Both patients and physicians inquire as early as March about the program which starts at the end of May."

Nate McKeen, Director of Vermont State Parks also sees the value in the collaboration. "Without the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, we'd be unable to sustain such a meaningful program which provides tangible benefits to Vermonters. We look forward to continuing this partnership with the council and giving Vermonters the opportunity to experience our diverse park system." ■



SIGNATURE

*Vermont State Parks
 Gov Council on Physical Fitness and Sports*

NOTES: *Sponsored by Vermont State Parks
 vtstateparks.com and Governor's Council
 on Physical Fitness and Sports
 Vermontfitness.org
 (Facebook @ VT Fitness and Sports)*



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VT Conference on Recreation

The Heart of Every Community

78th Annual Conference Parks & Recreation

By **Jessie Brodie & Adriane Martin**

The 78th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation was held on October 13th & 14th, 2021 back in person at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.

Though the conference had lower registration numbers than a typical in-person year, attendance was still great considering the ongoing pandemic effects. We were thrilled to see again over 78 attendees and 26 Exhibitors in person. To help make conference attendees feel safe during the ongoing pandemic, masking requirements were put in place while inside, as well as checking negative test or vaccine status upon arriving.

We are grateful that Lake Morey Resort was able to hold 2020 pricing for the venue and food menus, as that allowed us to keep conference registration fees the same as in year's past this year. Their staff continue to be so accommodating to our conference needs, and we are very thankful for their ongoing support.

We were also very fortunate this year to still attract talented speakers from all over the country, including the states of Colorado, Georgia, Tennessee, Nevada, California,

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 speaker Ian Hill, CEO of the National Grassroots Media Corporation, Humanitarian, Business Leader, Award Winning Social Innovator and World Record Breaker. Ian gave a compelling, heartfelt, and inspirational keynote about how Parks & Recreation is ideally suited to be the "Catalyst of a Renaissance."

It was so great to see all of our supporting sponsors and exhibitors in person this year 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 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 2022 Conference Chair with your ideas!*

For entertainment after the fireworks display this year, we kept gatherings low key and fun by having a variety of lawn and table games, along with a playlist of music created by the amazing, Jazmin Averbuck and committee.

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 Janice Lange, long time volunteer with VT Senior Games. The Organization Award was given to Vermont Adaptive, providing opportunities for every BODY! The Professional Award was given to Jenn Turmel from the Colchester 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." This worked out so well last year that we opted to keep all bidding online again this year so that those unable to attend the conference in person would still be able to participate. It also made final payments and accounting much easier for our Silent Auction committee who put in so much time and energy to deliver a truly fantastic Silent Auction again this year.

We were able to raise over \$4,000 in proceeds from over \$8,000 in 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 underway for the 2022 conference. In our planning efforts, we will be keeping budgets and content in mind as we all continue this journey through 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 2022 – keep recreating, stay well, and see out there again soon!

Sincerely,
2021 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 78th 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 \$4,000.00. 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.

2021 Auction Donors

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 Homewood Suites
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 Hotel Vermont
 North Beach Campground
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 Top Notch Resort and Spa
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 Cedar Knoll Country Club
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 Farm Way Inc
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 Kingdom Trails
 Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
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 Waterbury Sports
 Vermont Teddy Bear
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2021 Conference 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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2022 VERMONT CONFERENCE ON RECREATION

**WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
OCTOBER 12TH & 13TH, 2022**

Lake Morey Resort
Fairlee, VT



Submit a Speaker RFP!



**Vendor Registration Opens
in March!**

MORE INFO



VRPA /ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STATE TRACK MEET JULY 23, 2022

ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY

1000 MAIN STREET
ST. JOHNSBURY, VT

WWW.VRPA.COM

Save the date!



AGES 7-14

- ✓ 100, 200, 400, 800 Meter Dash
- ✓ 4x100 Meter Relay
- ✓ Long Jump
- ✓ Discuss & Shotput
- ✓ Hurdles
- ✓ Softball throw

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!

@vermontrecandparks

802-952-0030

www.vrpa.org



VRPA Nomination Form

Executive Committee

2022—2024



Interested in being a leader of your profession? Here is your chance to get involved!

Every two years the VRPA membership elects the Executive Board to serve as leaders of our Association. The officer positions of President, President-elect, Secretary and Treasurer are elected prior to the Annual Meeting in May through an online ballot vote. Four "at large" positions are then also selected by the President and Executive Director (ex-officio). The Executive Committee consisting of the officers, Past President, and the four at large appointed members will then be installed at the Annual Meeting.

If you are interested in serving on VRPA's Executive Board you must submit the form below. In order to be on the ballot, your membership must be in good standing. A description for each elected position is outlined in the VRPA By Laws [linked here](#).

Need more information? contact Jessica Brodie at Jessica@vrpa.org.

Submission Deadline is Friday, March 11th, 2022

First Name: _____
 Last Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Department: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email: _____

Executive Board Position:

From the list below, please write your name in the box next to the position you would like to be nominated for.

President Elect:

Secretary:

Treasurer:

VRPA At Large Member:
 (Appointed by President)

Authorization to be added to Ballot:

By signing your name, you agree to have your name added to the VRPA election ballot for the position indicated above.

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REGISTRATION IS OPEN - VISIT ILIPRA.ORG

One time registration includes monthly login (group participation is encouraged) & access to all 2022 recorded webinars. Earn up to 1.1 CEUs.

- Early Bird Member Rate (thru 1/31/22): **\$250**
- Regular Member Rate (2/1/22 - 10/29/22): **\$275**
(use code **SDWS22VRPA**)



skills development
webinar series



VRPA

March Quarterly Meeting

Learn how everyone can help VT Waterways

VRPA MARCH QUARTERLY MEETING

Wednesday, March 9th, 2022

Virtual via Zoom | 9:00 am-12:00 pm



CEU Session

Join us for a CEU session to learn how everyone can help our bodies of water here in Vermont. The session will discuss Cyanobacteria monitoring & lake-friendly best practices (.1 CEU)
Featuring Speakers: Bridget O'Brien & Oliver Pierson



VRPA Business Meeting

Join the VRPA Executive Committee for their business meeting to discuss important association topics and upcoming events. This is a great networking opportunity and chance to be involved with association planning!



Networking

By joining the VRPA for our Quarterly and Annual meetings, you are not just receiving great information, but helping to build your network with hundreds of amazing Parks & Recreation professionals across the state!



VERMONT
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802-952-0030



www.vrpa.org



Jessica@vrpa.org



VERMONT
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SUMMERAMA •CAMP STAFF TRAINING•

FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2022

IN PERSON - LOCATION TO COME

REGISTRATION OPEN SOON!

MORE INFO



Planned Training Topics

- Shoreline Protection
- Water Quality, Blue Green Algae, Suction Harvesting
- Pesticide Use / Organic Fertilizers
- FEMA Use & Projects
- Ballfields, Turf, Field Maintenance & Construction
- Trails; Motorized Vehicles, Trail Maintenance
- Tree Protection & Maintenance, Emerald Asher Borer Update
- New, Non-Traditional Recreational Assets; How to Maintain & Budget
- Climate Change, Impacts Into the Future, What it Means
- and so much more!



VERMONT
Recreation & Parks Association



2022 Vermont Maintenance Workshop

VENDOR INFO

Save the Date

Thursday, June 2, 2022

7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Middlebury Parks & Recreation
154 Creek Road,
Middlebury, Vermont

Vendor Displays

Hands On
Demonstrations

Educational
Workshops

Round Table
Discussions





Certified Pool/Spa Operators Course

March 22-23 | Robert Miller Community Center | Burlington, VT

What is Pool/Spa CPO®?

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

Why do you need training?

The CPO® course is a training program specially designed to meet the needs of supervisory or operations personnel working in public and semi-public recreational pools or water park facilities. As a pool or spa operator, you are obligated to provide a clean, disease free, and safe facility. Your facility must be kept in good operating order and needs to operate efficiently. Only an individual with suitable training and experience is qualified to meet these responsibilities.

REGISTER ONLINE

**Deadline to register is February 18
No refunds will be issued after the
registration deadline**

| | COST | |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| REGISTRATION | Non-Member \$395 | VRPA Member \$375 |

*Price includes course materials and lunch both days

CERTIFICATION INFO

- The CPO® certification program includes pool and spa chemistry, testing, treatment, filtration, maintenance, automatic feeding equipment, and government requirements.
- The CPO® certification program requires an open book written examination.
- The CPO® certification is valid for five years.
- This course will be taught by an NSPF®-certified instructor.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Service Technicians
 - Pool Directors
 - Pool Managers
 - Health Inspectors
 - Apartment/Condo/ Building Managers
 - Recreation Directors
 - Engineering Staff
 - Spa Personnel
 - Maintenance Personnel
 - Aquatic Staff
 - Recreation Facility Managers
 - Military Installations
- From community recreation centers, swim clubs, municipalities, hotels, motels, swim parks, resorts, health clubs, country clubs, colleges, universities, military installations, hospitals, schools – any facility with a pool, spa, or aquatic feature.

COURSE BENEFITS

- Proven educational tool.
- Widely accepted by local and state authorities.
- Covers topics necessary for pool and spa operators including local and state codes.
- Comprehensive handbook that is updated regularly.
- The CPO® certification is recognized nationally and internationally.
- Gives participants a better understanding of the operator's role in pool care, management and risk reduction.
- The CPO® Certification program is eligible for IACET Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

DAILY SCHEDULE

Day 1 - Tuesday, March 22

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 7:30–8AM | Coffee & Registration |
| 8AM–Noon | CPO Program begins |
| Noon–1PM | LUNCH (provided) |
| 1–5PM | CPO Program continues |

Day 2 - Wednesday, March 23

| | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 8AM–Noon | CPO Program Continues |
| Noon–1PM | LUNCH (provided) |
| 1–2PM | CPO Program Continues |
| 2–3PM | Review & questions |
| 3–5PM | EXAM (75% minimum) |

MORE INFO

For more information about the program's cancellation policy, CEU credit, exam and accommodations, [click here](#) or call VRPA at 802-952-0030.

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'21-'22 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 & Spas
 American Camp Association, New England
 ArborTrek Smugglers Notch LLC
 Ascutney Outdoors
 Atlantic Golf and Turf
 Auto Be Green
 BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont
 Brain Injury Assoc. of VT
 Bromley Mountain Resort
 Burke Playgrounds
 Catamount Trail Association
 Clivus New England, Inc.
 Connecticut Recreation & Parks Assoc.
 Cousineau Forest Products
 Dubois & King Inc.
 DuraEdge Products
 Durgin and Crowell Lumber Co.
 Fillion Associates
 Franklin Paint Company
 Franklin Sports, Inc.
 Grassland Equipment & Irrigation Corp
 Green Mountain Club
 Green Mountain Horse Association (GMHA)
 Hew Hampshire Recreation & Parks Association
 Kelly Brush Foundation
 Kingdom Games
 KOMPAN
 Landscape Vermont
 Live Like Benjo Inc.
 Local Motion
 Love Your Brain Foundation
 MA Recreation and Park Association
 Marturano Recreation/GameTime
 ME Recreation and Parks Association
 MTE Inc - Turf Equipment Solutions
 MUSCO Lighting
 MyRec.com
 National Recreation and Park Association
 NAYS
 NCSI/SSCI
 NE Sports Turfgrass Foundation, Inc.
 NESTMA
 New England Mountain Bike Association
 New England Park Assoc. Inc.
 New England Recreation Group

New York State Recreation & Park Society
 Northstar Fireworks
 NPS Rivers and Trails Program
 O'Brien & Sons
 Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society, Inc
 Performan Artist - Jason Tardy
 Performance Artist - Calypso Connections
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 (RASTA)
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 Smugglers Notch Resort
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 UltiPlay Parks and Playgrounds
 US Playground Surfacing, LLC
 UVM Parks, Rec & Tourism
 Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports
 Vermont After School
 Vermont Arts Council
 Vermont Display, Inc.
 Vermont Mountain Bike Association
 Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance
 Vermont Outdoor Guide Association
 Vermont Senior Games Association
 Vermont Systems
 Vermont Youth Conservation Corp
 VT Agency of Agriculture
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 VT Fresh Network
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 VT Safe Kids
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25th Annual

New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

March 8-10, 2022 • R.I. Convention Center



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Wed., March 9 • 9am–5pm with *Live Auction & Reception*
Thurs., March 10 • 9am–1pm

Educational Session Hours

Tues. March 8 • 8am–5pm *Several Pre-Conference Seminars including Full-Day Cemetery Management and Grass Tennis Court Management*

Wed., March 9 • 8am–11am & 1pm–4pm
Golf, Sports Turf & Grounds, Equipment Techs.

Thurs., March 10 • 8–10am & 1pm–3:30pm
Golf, Sports/Grounds, Equipment Techs and Lawn Care/Landscapes

Pre-Conference Seminars

Tues., March 8 • 8am–5pm
Call (401) 841-5490 *Visit website for details*

Sports Turf Seminar

Thurs., March 10 • 8:30am–11am *From Concept to Planning to Construction to Maintenance and Beyond!*

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The annual **VRPA Membership Directory** is available to all current members in electronic and hard-copy format.



Access to VRPA library.



Opportunities to meet other people who work and volunteer in parks and recreation.



Access to certification, awards, grant information, technical assistance, and many other resources.

For more information, visit vrpa.org

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE VERMONT RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

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

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

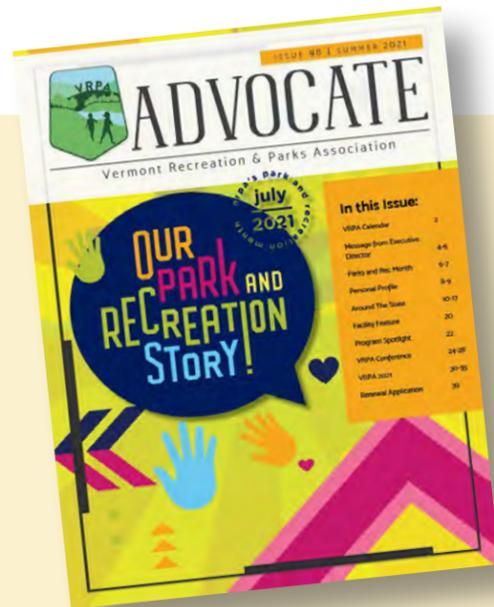
Nearly every Friday, the **weekly *Recreation Check-In*** is sent to all current members via email. This provides up-to-date information about VRPA news, current issues in parks and recreation, funding and grant opportunities, employment opportunities, and an opportunity to ask questions of other VRPA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



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APPLICATION & ANNUAL RENEWAL

NAME _____ TITLE _____

ORGANIZATION _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

OFFICE PHONE _____ CELL PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

CLASSIFICATION (See next page for classification descriptions)

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

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

Check enclosed Payment being mailed Total amount due \$_____

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

MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

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

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <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: _____ | |

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

Are you a member of NRPA? No Yes, who? _____

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY RENEWED YOUR 2021-2022 VRPA MEMBERSHIP, IT IS TIME.
IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RENEWED, THANK YOU!

Online: vrpa.org | Mail: send printed application to VRPA, P.O. Box 33, Brownsville, VT 05037
Questions? Call the VRPA office at 802-878-2077



ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

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