



VRPA Advocate

Issue 87

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

Fall 2016

VRPA Presidents' Perspective

Scott Hausler, CPRP,
VRPA President



I often think back reminding myself what really inspired me to become a parks & recreation professional. My small town upbringing in the Midwest certainly kept me active and engaged in many leisure activities that continue to bring me joy. I'm reminded daily of giving back to my community through service, a characteristic that my parents taught me through public service outside their professional careers. That, undoubtedly, is what taught me the value of service to community. But most importantly, the passion for what I care about in my career and daily life is what I find myself thinking of the most.

I truly have a passion for parks and recreation. Today, one might say that I'm a very seasoned professional in the field. I believe that I am and can't walk away from that fact I've been in the profession since 1987. I'm one that eats, breathes and sleeps parks & recreation. I'm passionate about community, our natural resources and everything in parks and recreation services. It's a genuine interest of mine that drives an internal passion for what we do.

Recently, I took the time to review the Vermont Conference on Recreation brochure and was thrilled to see yet another excellent program for our VRPA professionals. If you are passionate about parks, recreational services and being committed to your community, you need not go further than the Lake Morey Resort on September 21st and 22nd.

(Continued on page 7)

73rd Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation... Read On for Lots of Great Reasons Why You Don't Want to Miss It



The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is pleased to be your host at this year's Vermont Conference on Recreation. This is our biggest event of the year and we are honored to be able to provide this opportunity for YOU to network and learn together with parks and recreation professionals and volunteers from throughout the state.

In addition to having several Vermont speakers, sessions will also be presented by speakers from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Washington DC, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. As always, the annual Vermont Conference on Recreation promises to be a great opportunity to maximize your training dollars and ensure that you and your staff remain current with the latest trends. Year after year, the education sessions at this conference are highly rated by attendees for their content, interaction, and useful takeaways.

Exclusive Exhibit Hall time is included on both days of the conference. This is an excellent opportunity to meet with 50+ exhibitors all in one space...what a great way to learn about their latest products and services. You have options to register for just Wednesday, just Thursday or both days, so hopefully all your staff will be able to attend at least one day of the conference. Go to www.vrpa.org for the full conference brochure and a fillable registration form.

At press time, we have 114 people registered to attend the conference. If you still haven't made the commitment to carve out the time to attend, the

Conference Committee has some suggestions for why you do not want to miss it.

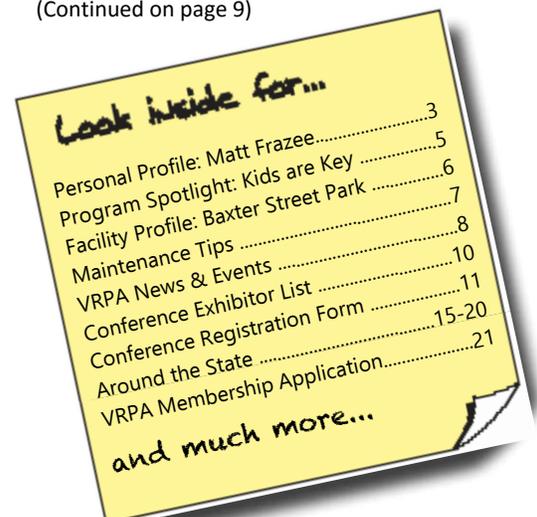
"Think Program, People, Price and Place. You get a terrific program at a great price with super people at a beautiful place!! Come for it all!"

- Muriel More, Historian, Retired

"Great sessions, fantastic people and good times! That is what the Vermont Conference on Recreation has to offer. Whether you attend one day or both, we guarantee that you will come away with new ideas and new friends for networking, and you will have had fun while you were there. Just the opportunity to meet with 50+ exhibitors is worth the drive! We hope to see you at Lake Morey on September 21st and 22nd."

- Todd Goodwin, Director,
Williston Recreation & Parks

(Continued on page 9)





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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.

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

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VRPA Calendar of Events

2016
 Sep 21-22 73rd Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation
 Oct 4-8 NRPA Conference, St. Louis, MO
 Oct 18 VRPA Executive Committee Retreat
 Nov 17 Vermont Performance Showcase, Lake Morey
 Dec TBA VRPA Quarterly Meeting

2017
 Jan 5-7 NNE Recreation Conference, Attitash, NH
 Mar TBA VRPA Quarterly Meeting
 Mar 21-22 Certified Pool/Spa Operators Course
 Apr 4-6 Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course
 May TBA VT/NH Maintenance Workshop
 May TBA VRPA Annual Meeting

Message from the Executive Director

In July, I had the good fortune to attend a meeting



in St. Louis with the Executive Directors of twenty-five state recreation and park associations from around the country. New England was very well represented with John Whalen from Massachusetts, Deb Smith from Maine, Kerry Horne from New Hampshire, and me from Vermont. You will be pleased to know that the group asked me to share the details of our VIP Incentive Program during a discussion about creative things people are doing to encourage member participation. I was thrilled to share it after first mentioning that we stole the idea from New Hampshire.

I always come away from these meetings so energized and enthused about diving back into my work! I whole-heartedly believe in the value of networking and over the years, time and time again have heard VRPA members validate the benefits of trading off time away from the office for the valuable insights gained participating in leadership meetings and professional development opportunities. I know it is true but I got to thinking about why.

When I came back from my meeting with the Council of State Executive Directors, I took a few minutes to do a little search on the internet. I came across an article by a Georgia trainer named Carmen Lewis who suggests that the importance of affiliation and networking is that it changes the way we think and feel about ourselves. She contends that affiliated, we take real pride in our accomplishments and become more self-confident with our decision-making and choices. So interesting, I had never thought about it that way but I think she is on to something. So we have it

within ourselves all the time but working together with professional friends and colleagues gives us the spark we need every now and again to get fired back up. We gain energy from each other.

Sparks, fire, energy...of course this brings me to the theme of this year's Vermont Conference on Recreation

– "Ignite the Light." The energy in the air at our annual state recreation conference makes these two days some of my most favorite of the year.

If you have registered for the conference, I very much look forward to being with you at Lake Morey on September 21st and 22nd. If you haven't registered for the conference yet, I hope you will think about joining us to ignite your light. We offer a money-back-guarantee and have never had anyone take us up on it, just to give you a hint at how people feel about the value of this conference.

A very big thank you to the 2016 Conference Committee. They have been working since last December to put together the upcoming 73rd Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation. Every year, it is a professional highlight for me to work with this fabulous group of people to create this conference.

See you at Lake Morey!

Betsy Terry, CPRP
 VRPA Executive Director

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."
 - Helen Keller*

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

Matt Frazee, Director, Stowe Parks & Recreation Department

By Betsy Terry, CPRP

Met Matt Frazee, Director of the Stowe Parks and Recreation Department and a fifth-year member of the VRPA Executive Committee.

When I asked Matt about his preparation for a career in parks and recreation, he answered the question similarly to how the majority of people I ask answer it. “Initially I had no idea what I wanted to go to college for. I always did well with math and accounting so without a better plan I went to Bentley College in Waltham, MA for Business Management. Almost immediately, I realized neither the city nor the business world were for me. I still wasn’t sure what I wanted to do but I knew two things, I loved Vermont and I loved the outdoors. After two years, I decided to transfer to UVM to study Outdoor Recreation Management.”

While at UVM, Matt had the good fortune to do an internship working as a National Park Ranger at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock. His first position out of college was Vermont Park Ranger along with his newlywed wife, Sarah, at Wilgus State Park in Ascutney. He then moved on to his first full-time position in the field as Program Director for the Town of Hartford where he worked with Tad Nunez and the Hartford staff for 9 years. He has been working in his current position as Parks and Recreation Director for the Town of Stowe for the last three and a half years.

Matt shared, “Definitely my love and passion for outdoor recreation drove me to this career path. I have always believed strongly in the value of athletics and outdoor recreation. I believe recreation and athletics are great avenues for teaching youth many values, ethics, lessons and skills that translate and relate through all aspects of their lives and the benefits of recreation to one’s physical and mental health cannot be overstated. Whether it’s music, dance, hunting, fishing, hiking, swimming, biking, athletics or any other form of recreation, I feel privileged to work in a profession where it is my job to provide and promote these opportunities.”



When asked what he considers his greatest career accomplishments, Matt humbly replied, “That’s a tough one to answer. Everything we accomplish in this field is the result of the work and effort of more than one person, whether it has been with great staff and colleagues I’ve had the good fortune and pleasure of working with or great instructors or volunteers. So much work from so many go into every summer camp, every athletic season, every seasonal program guide, every special event, and every park and facility. Here in Stowe, I have been a part of the opening of the Stowe Arena, but there are several individuals who deserve much more credit than I for the wonderful state-of-the-art facility we now have. I think what we all strive for in this profession is to provide opportunities for people that will improve lives and it’s nice to know that at some point, we have all

been able to do that in some way. I take particular enjoyment in sharing my love and passion for fishing and hunting and to see that spark ignite for the first time in another person is a special thing to me.”

What Matt personally values most about being a VRPA member is the opportunity for networking and getting to know other professionals around the State. Whether it’s through participating on the Executive Committee, attending conferences and meetings, or participating on VRPA program committees, I always gain knowledge and perspective from the interactions with others in the field.”

In his spare time, Matt enjoys coaching their three boys in soccer and baseball and sharing with them his love for camping, fishing, hunting, downhill skiing, water skiing, biking, hiking and the Vermont outdoors.



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Program Spotlight

Kids are Key to a Successful Summer at South Burlington Recreation and Parks

By Maggie Leugers, CPRP, Director

This past spring the South Burlington Recreation and Parks Department was awarded a \$33,000 grant from the National Recreation and Parks Association. The grant, in partnership with the Walmart Foundation, supports children's health through the "Commitment for Health" program developed to enhance daily nutritional meals, snacks and physical activity during the summer. This grant supported our Junior REC Camp, an 8-week day camp for youth who have completed K-6 grade. Throughout the summer, these grant monies were used to provide daily wholesome, local, organic nutritious lunches and snacks to our campers. The dedicated staff at the South Burlington School District Nutritional Services were our camp chefs. The funds didn't cover the full cost of meals, but supported the work of nutrition and physical activity. We made a conscious decision to include daily meals in the cost of camp so that every camper would benefit from the incredible meals and snacks we had planned.

Campers had the opportunity to assist in planting and harvesting food each week, through working with the Common Roots farmers and field trips to the South Village gardens. This hands-on down and dirty experience gave the children a good understanding of where their food comes from and why fresh, local farm-to-table is so important to experiencing good nutrition. Having invested themselves in the growing and harvesting cycles provided the buy-in needed for all the campers to sample the fruits (and vegetables) of their labors when it came time to make meal time choices.



Kellie May and Heather Williams



Healthy food choices and the importance of regular physical activity were promoted in weekly sessions presented by experts from a local South Burlington fitness gym, Body Resolution, another of our "Commitment to Health" partners. The work of Body Resolution allowed the campers to have hands-on physical education training twice a week and provided some essential before and after statistical data.

A 5-year campaign by NRPA is supporting the implementation and evaluation of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards in parks and recreation sites across the country, and we were eager to jump onboard as early participants. NRPA has a goal of having over 2,000 sites implemented in their out-of-school programs by the end of the five-year campaign and we would encourage other Vermont recreation departments to look into this extraordinary opportunity. In the work we all do, most of us are already exceeding the physical activity standards and with the prepared supplemental NRPA documents and activities, implementing the nutrition piece is easy and "organic".

On August 9th, NRPA staffers Kellie May and Heather Williams came to visit us in South Burlington. They were particularly impressed with the meals served daily by our camp chefs, Rhonda Ketner and Karyl Kent. Karyl made sure that all menu items were nutritionally balanced, using whole grains, low fat, low sugar preparations and focusing heavily on fresh vegetables and fruits. The daily fresh fruit and salad bar and consideration for all special dietary

needs resulted in all campers having a delicious, fun experience.

Kellie and Heather were also impressed with meals being served "home-style" including tablecloths and center pieces. This "Kids Café" was accomplished in three sittings with campers and staff eating together whenever possible. We found, just like at home, that the focal point of camp switched to the kitchen. The NRPA staff went away planning to share this positive model with other out-of-school meal and recreational program sites across the country.

As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words and you can tell from these happy campers that they had one fantastic summer from beginning to end. Consider stepping up your summer camp offerings next year and taking the leap to sign on to the "Commitment to Health".



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is pleased to partner with the Walmart Foundation to support children's health through park and recreation out-of-school time programs. NRPA with the support of the Walmart foundation has funded 85 local park and recreation agencies in 2016. Go to <http://www.nrpa.org/committohealth/> to learn more.



Facility Profile

Baxter Street Park in Rutland

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

Our department was asked to support a Community Development Block Grant by agreeing to build a park where a house would be razed. We said YES! This initiative was part of a drive to rehabilitate the neighborhood and create a neighborhood of choice.

When I saw the link for the NRPA “Fund a Park” fundraising platform and sent it to my project partner at NeighborWorks, she thought it was a great idea. We applied and were accepted. NRPA does a great job giving you all the information you need for a successful crowd fund but it was not quite as easy as I thought it would be. You need to have 1/3 of your fundraising goal committed prior to the start, and then within the first 3 days have that money show up as a donation. We set a goal of \$10,000 and surpassed it with a final tally of \$25,000. We didn’t hit the \$10K by the last day but ended up with additional donations based on the enthusiasm generated for this project. Our largest donation was \$10,000 from the Rotary Club for fencing and our smallest on-line donation was \$5.00. All were recognized on a sign at the park. Read more at <http://www.fundyourpark.org/campaign/detail/4184>.

We held a meeting on the Baxter Park site to get design input from neighborhood residents. NBF Architects of Rutland agreed to take the information gleaned from the meeting and draft possible park options; they did this pro-bono with an intern and oversight by a senior architect. We met on the park site again and presented three design choices. After more discussion, a neighborhood vote, and careful consideration of playground safety and surfacing standards, the final design was prepared with a playground and a pavilion in this small 85’ x 95’ public park.

We updated our Project Vision community at monthly meetings. We challenged the churches to help us build the pavilion. One stepped right up and brought in another. They paid for all the materials except the concrete pad and built it in a little more than a day with talented friends from several different

churches.

Park development started with dismantling a playground at a nearby Head Start School site that was no longer being used. With so many young families in the neighborhood and two 6-12 year-old playgrounds within ½ mile of Baxter Street Park, we decided the 2-5 year old playground unit would be a good choice and the price was right, too!



Check out the Expression Swing installed at Baxter Street Park...pretty cool!

With a State Buildings & Services Grant we were able to fill in the gaps for funding and purchase all the pieces we needed. Our largest expense was a nice fence and with the \$10,000 donation from Rotary and a portion of the state grant money, we were able to purchase it. I suggested purchasing sod, as it would have been a challenge to grow grass from seed and our Parks Director, Bob Peterson, had an even better idea. We own a sod cutter and all the grass inside the fence at White Pool was getting torn up with our pool replacement project. The sod was salvaged and successfully used at Baxter Street Park.

Rutland Blooms, a non-profit overseen by Green Mountain Power, purchased four good size trees for the park. It was instant trees!



What did I learn from the project?

- 1) Going door to door in a neighborhood isn’t as scary as you think it will be.
- 2) Have neighborhood meetings right in the middle of the neighborhood and don’t call it a committee meeting.
- 3) Food always helps bring in people.
- 4) It takes longer to build a park than you think it will take even when it is only 85’ x 95’.
- 5) Get used to saying thank you a lot as it takes a community to build a playground when you are asked to build one with no money.
- 6) Ground breaking and grand openings are important. It creates positive energy and allows you to publicly thank people.
- 7) Keep repeating that the neighborhood needs to take ownership of the behavior in the park. It is the only way a playground will thrive in a neighborhood.



Cindi Wight shared that she has gotten so many compliments from the community on how nice the park looks. “It is because of the great job that our parks crew did and continue to do.” From L to R - Tyler Dahlin, Conrad Zeller, Zach Phelps, Aaron Bates, Cindi, Bob Peterson, and Jeff Pratt. Missing from the photo is Kyle Bourgeois.

Pres Perspective (continued)

This year's Keynote Speaker, Robbin Phillips, is the President of Brains on Fire and her educational session is one I do not want to miss and neither should you. The session outline talks about marketing techniques that have the power to truly touch the lives of our communities, inspired by the power of purpose, passion and people. I look forward to attending her session and hopefully picking up one of her books "The Passion Conversation: Understand, Sparking and Sustaining Word of Mouth Marketing". A book we all should read and add to our professional libraries.

Additionally, you will have the opportunity to attend sessions on Private, Family & Corporate Foundation Grants, Special Event Planning, Lighting The Path – Building A Better Youth Sports Philosophy, Maximizing Support for Park Sponsorships, Assessing Trails for Safety & Sustainability, Standing the Heat & Achieving the Impossible and many more. The session line up for the conference, without doubt, reflects entirely on the theme "Ignite the Light".

I encourage you to express your passion for the profession by igniting your light in your parks, programs and community. Be proud of what you do and have a safe fall season.

Respectfully,

Scott Hausler
VRPA President



Summer Maintenance Tips from Harlan Smith, Head of Grounds & Facilities, Essex Jct. Recreation & Parks

Low spots in your athletic fields - With the heavy use of your fields throughout the summer and very little time to keep them up, it is important to have extra soil around and to keep the low spots filled. These areas will hold water and kill off the grass in them, along with becoming bigger if the field is used in inclement weather. We try to make sure if we notice a low or bare spot while mowing, that we make the time right then to go and add a little soil to keep the water running off and the fields in good shape.

Misting Stations - Recently during the very hot and humid weather, we constructed very inexpensive misting stations with ordinary garden hoses. We poked holes in the hose with a 4 penny finish nail about every 10 inches the whole length of the twenty-five foot hose. We then capped the end and hung one to the side of our building with zip ties and another from the rafters in one of our pavilions. The feedback was tremendous and all positive. We picked the locations to make sure we were on a solid surface so we were not creating muddy walkways.

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VRPA News & Events



2016 VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy State Track Meet

2016 VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy State Track Meet Results
(Complete results are available at www.802timing.com)

With 433 registered athletes, swarms of volunteers, and the St. Johnsbury community welcoming us for the ninth consecutive year, the 2016 VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy Track & Field Meet was held on Saturday, July 23rd. Despite all the beautiful weather we've had this summer, unfortunately thunder storms halted the event before the finish but a full morning of competition had been completed and fun was had by all.

Special thanks to Joe Fox - the St. Johnsbury Recreation Director, the St. Johnsbury Kiwanis, and St. Johnsbury Academy for being our host sponsor for the 9th year. We also couldn't have done this without our VRPA Track Coordinator, Gary Rogers from Burlington, Parks, Recreation & Waterfront and Pavel Dvorak and his 802Timing Team. For the first time ever, the athletes each received a meet t-shirt thanks to a generous sponsorship from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont. To all the parents, coaches, and community volunteers who came to help at the meet, thank you all very much for making it possible to provide this exciting statewide competition available to our aspiring young athletes.



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St. Johnsbury Recreation	387
Burlington Parks, Rec, & W'front	187
Champlain Valley Summer Track	171.5
Mt. Mansfield Summer Track	140.5
Hartford Parks & Recreation	124
Lake Region Summer Track	107.5
Essex Parks & Recreation	70.5
Newport Parks & Recreation	62
South Burlington Recreation	46
Saint Albans Recreation	38
Brattleboro Recreation	35
Colchester Parks & Recreation	27
Montpelier Recreation	21
Barre Recreation	9
Rutland Recreation & Parks	8



The 2016 Barre Track Team

The names of the winning teams will be engraved on the perpetual plaques:

Large Team
St. Johnsbury
Burlington

Small Team
Lake Region
Brattleboro



Sarah Towne, a member of the Hartford Parks & Recreation Track Team, wearing her new VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy Track Meet t-shirt. She won a 6th place ribbon in the girls grade 3/4 softball throw.



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Conference (continued)

"I love this Conference. Each year it is chock full of exceptional workshops and speakers, energizing networking with colleagues from around the state, informative interaction with vendors, plus...the annual Exhibitor Social featuring dinner and a Team Challenge is a blast!

- Kym Duchesneau, Recreation Coordinator, Milton Recreation

"Fall is a busy time for all of us, let's face it there really never is a down time in the world of recreation and parks, so make this conference a priority in your planning. The professional and personal opportunities that can be gained are too numerous to count and as hard as we all work, we deserve a day or two away from the grind. So put the guilt on the backburner, throw your excuses to the wind and IGNITE YOUR LIGHT!"

- Holly Baker, Assistant Director, South Burlington Recreation

"Recreation professionals working in the private sector, whether ski area, resort or adventure providers, you too can definitely benefit from attending. This conference is

high quality, close to home and reasonably priced. Rather than spending funds on travel to distant conferences, choose to spend locally, enable yourself to bring additional staff and get more out of your training dollars!"

- Marge McIntosh, Retired Ski Industry & Recreation Professional

"The Vermont Conference on Recreation showcases the state's commitment to recreational experiences for both residents and visitors. The myriad of workshop presenters and professional vendors is unparalleled to any conference or symposium hosted within the State of Vermont. Each year, attendees reliably walk away with new knowledge and skills that relate to their work environment and personal life. This conference is where professionals from all aspects of Vermont's recreational spectrum gather to learn, network, and reflect on the importance of our collective efforts."

- Josh Ryan, Principal/Trail Designer & Builder, Timber & Stone, LLC

"For me, the conference offers the opportunity to connect with the recreation community as a whole, to network and

learn, to catch up with former colleagues and meet new people in our field. I always leave the conference feeling reflective, inspired and thankful for being a part of a great conference and a great community of professionals. And I never grow tired of those beautiful autumn views of Lake Morey in the afternoon light."

- Rob Peterson, NW Parks Regional Manager, Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

"This conference is not only great professional development for anyone with recreation management duties, but also offers opportunities for work skill development and networking. I always learn something that I apply immediately to my job!"

- Jessica Savage, Recreation Program Manager, VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation

"Hopefully you will be able to be there for the social on Wednesday evening. It is a great way to network and meet vendors in a fun and engaging environment."

- Donna Diaz, Director YWCA Camp Hochelaga



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Silent Auction Bid List Will be Emailed before the Conference

If you have been at our conference before, you know that we have an amazing "Vermont's Finest" Silent Auction. The Silent Auction bid list will be emailed out before the conference so that you can plan your bidding strategy. Be on the lookout and plan to bring your checkbook as we do not accept credit cards.

Very special thanks to the 2016 Silent Auction Committee: Emily Boek (Stowe), Darla Champine (South Burlington), Jessy Cudworth (Brattleboro), Brian Bevacqua (Quechee), and Nicole Densmore (Rutland).



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It is Going to be a Full House in the Exhibit Hall at This Year's Conference

With Exclusive Exhibit Hall Time on Wednesday evening and Thursday morning, plan to be there when the doors open so that you will have time to visit with all our exhibitors. You will want to be there the entire time to increase your chances of winning the Exhibit Hall Raffle and taking home a FitBit or a \$50 gift certificate for the Silent Auction.

Please remember to thank our exhibitors for choosing to come to our conference; they have lots of invitations and we so appreciate them all choosing to be with us at lake Morey on September 21st and 22nd!

Here is a list of our exhibitors registered to date.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
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Registration fees include meals for the day/days you are registered.	<u>Wed. Only</u>	<u>Thurs. Only</u>	<u>Both Days</u>
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<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$135	<input type="checkbox"/> \$135	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200
Conference Registration - Community Volunteers/Retirees/Friends:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Member (VRPA, VTGC, NE State Rec Assoc, & NRPA members)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$105
Conference Registration – Students (fees waived for student volunteers):	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65*	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95*
<i>*Price includes a one-year Student VRPA Membership</i>			
A la carte Meals:	<input type="checkbox"/> Wed. Fajita Social \$20 (Registered for Thurs & coming Wed night) <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday: <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon \$25 (Bring a guest)		

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 Email: betsey@vrpa.org
 Phone: 802-878-2077

REGISTRATION PAYMENT:

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REFUND POLICY: Cancellations must be received in writing by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9, 2016. All cancellations are subject to a \$25 cancellation fee. No refunds will be given after September 9th but substitutions will be allowed; please submit substitutions in writing.

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- Incorporating Boardwalks into Park Settings
- RecTrac Q & A
- All About Time
- Private, Family & Corporate Found. Grants
- Getting E-Organized
- Special Events Planning - Fundraising

Wednesday Evening

- Exhibit Hall - Exclusive Time
- Exhibitor Social – Fajita Dinner
- Team Challenge – Trivia

THURS Morning: 9:30-10:40am

- Assessing Trails for Safety & Sustainability
- Evaluation & Assessment
- Maximizing Support for Park Sponsorships
- Standing the Heat & Achieving Impossible
- The Passion Conversation Continued

THURS Afternoon: 1:30-2:40pm

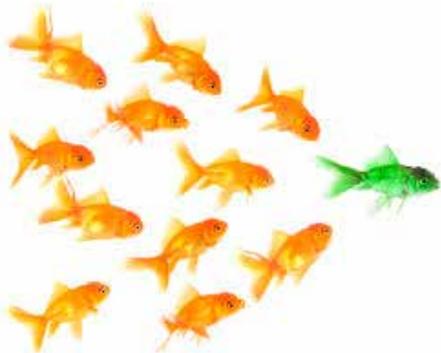
- Acquiring a Recreation Trails Program Grant
- Listening, Learning & Leadership
- Americans Use & Perceptions of Local Parks
- The Dos & Don'ts of Interviewing

THURS Afternoon: 2:50-4:00pm

- Flow Trails & Pump Tracks
- Fueling the Fire - Senior Programming
- Non-Verbal Communication
- Land Use Planning for Recreation

Leaders, How Do You Begin Your Conversations? Nine Phrases NOT to Use

I really believe that what begins well ends well. It is important to begin a conversation in such a way that allows the other person to hear and think about your message. Recently, I sat and observed a senior leader begin his conversation with two directors by stating, "As you are probably already thinking...." One director looked at the other and then at their leader and said courageously, "You know when you say that it scares me to death?" The other director chimed in by saying, "Yes, it just makes me hope that I am thinking the same as you, and if I'm not, I really wouldn't be inclined to tell you." Their candid feedback really helped this leader recognize how important it is to begin a conversation in a way that doesn't make it difficult for the person to respond, disagree, or add their perspective



As a leader it is important to think about what kind of information you want to give or receive from your listener. The way you begin a conversation, particularly a potentially difficult conversation, will have everything to do with how the other person responds. In an attempt to be a more collaborative leader, some will employ what they think is a softer approach which can end up feeling somewhat manipulative.

Here are a number of phrases or words that any leader would do best **not to** employ in beginning a conversation.

"I'm sure you're already thinking about this." If someone hasn't thought about this, do you really think they would candidly say, "Well actually, I haven't thought about this?" If they did admit they haven't thought about the topic, they might violate the expectations of the leader and make him or her question the intellectual capacity of their listener. No one will run that risk. They would probably

choose to say nothing or just go along. Instead, if you really want to know what someone is thinking, all you need to do is ask them. If they feel safe, then they will give a candid response, allowing you to gain their perspective without tainting their response.

"Tell me if I am wrong..." This statement creates the presumption that the leader is right and creates a difficult hurdle for the other person to overcome. Not many would dare to say, "Yes, I have to tell you that you are wrong." That is not going to happen. When a leader begins this way, it is like saying, "I just want you to do this." If you want to know what the other person thinks, make a statement of what you think and then ask them what they think. For example: "I think we need to spend more time addressing our clients' needs. What do you think?" You could then follow up with the question, "How do you think we might best do that?" Asking such questions allows the person to think and respond and provides you with insight into how they are thinking.

"I don't mean to offend you..." This is what people usually say before they offend someone. So this phrase is really a setup to offend the person. It is like you are giving yourself permission to be disrespectful. If you think that a person might be offended by something that you have to tell them, then you should really think about how you might deliver your message in a way that is respectful. If you are giving feedback, it is important that the person understands the information in order to make the appropriate changes in their behavior. Beginning a conversation in this manner offends them before you have even

delivered the message.

"My understanding is..." This statement has the effect of saying, "Whatever your understanding is, you're not understanding or I wouldn't have to tell you what you should understand." Ask the person what their understanding is first. Once you know what they understand and what they don't, then you can offer them some additional data that you would like them to know and apply. You could use this statement once you have asked them questions and you want to clarify. However, I wouldn't begin the conversation this way. Ask before tell.

"That is a creative idea, but..." Anytime you use the word "but" in a sentence, it negates everything that went before it. If you heard the above statement, you would almost expect to hear something like, "That was a creative idea, but it's the stupidest thing I have ever heard." When people hear "but" they know that everything that follows is

(Continued on page 16)

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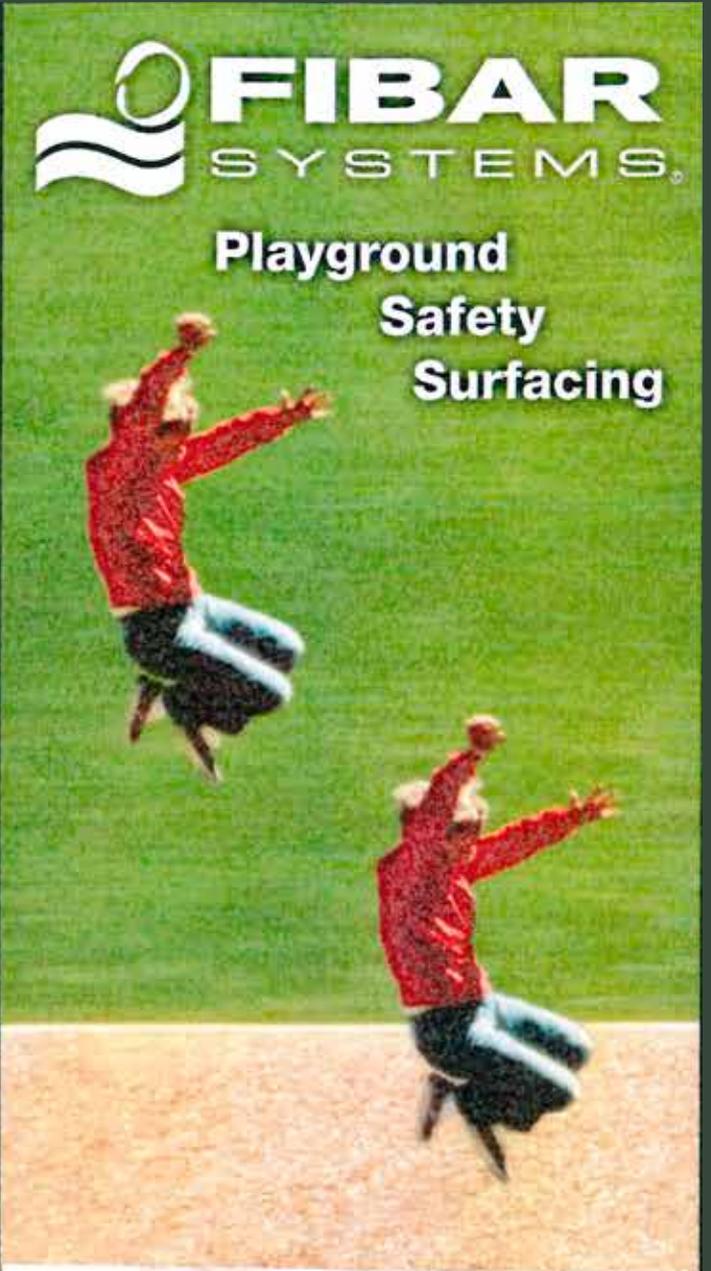
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Vermont Ranks 4th in the Nation for Most AmeriCorps Members



The Corporation for National and Community Service has released the states and cities which produce the most AmeriCorps members, and Vermont ranks #4 in the nation. Vermont Youth Conservation Corps is engaging 76 young adults in service this year through AmeriCorps, including a crew led by Connie Henshaw and Eli Beattie.

After a six-week stint along the Appalachian Trail's very remote back side of Killington, the VYCC crew moved to Clarendon Gorge near Route 103. Spread in pairs and trios along a steep incline about 200 feet long, the crew is preparing to build three rock structures that will retain soil and divert water. Shoulder to shoulder, Corps Members heave rocks and move earth with the assistance of heavy rock bars and pick mattocks.

Josh and Emily are trying to get the first stone of a crib wall to sit evenly in the hole they have dug, but it wobbles under Emily's feet when she tests it. Josh suggests moving the rock to even the bottom of the hole. Emily listens, allows for a pause, and asks a clarifying question. The discussion lasts no more than two minutes, at which time each person clearly understands and has agreed to the plan - as they should, before propping up a 300 pound rock and reaching underneath it.

"Trail," calls Emily, the first Corps Member to see approaching hikers. It's not a loud call, but the crew heeds it by stepping off the tread to allow the hikers to pass comfortably.

Work resumes as quietly as it paused. One could mistake this quiet for lack of energy or enthusiasm or physical effort, but that would be a grave miscalculation. For example, a pair successfully unearths a large stone that has been challenging the entire crew for quite some time. There have been several discussions, a few strategies, and lots of sweat leading up to this moment. The achievement is celebrated with a hearty high five and big smiles; then, on to the next task. There is much more to do before the day is out and the crew is eager to set stones.

A lot of learning takes place in this culture of few words and soft voices. Corps Members are tuned in to their surroundings and crew mates. Connie

summarizes, "Living outside, you start to hear and see things that you weren't able to notice before."

VYCC is focused on this year's remaining projects and simultaneously beginning to plan for the 2017 season. It's never too early to send project ideas our way. Contact Patrick Pfeifer at Patrick.Pfeifer@vycc.org to discuss how we can work with you in 2017!



Connie Henshaw and Eli Beatty are co-leading one of five AmeriCorps crews this year.



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Nine Phrases (continued)

going to be a negative response. Rather than use “but”, you would be better off to use “and”, “and yet”, or “to build on that.” These phrases allow a person’s idea to stand and allows you to add another bit of data that needs to be considered.

“I need you to...” or “You need to...”

This comes across as a command or a demand which can be very demeaning. We don’t command people; we work with them. Rather than make such a statement, you would be better off to ask for their assistance, such as, “Would you have some time to help me right now?” or “Could you help me with...?” Asking questions as a means of making a request is much more respectful to a person and communicates value for their contribution. Also, don’t be afraid to use the words “please” and “thank you.”

“I’m not the one that thinks this, but...” If you are not the one that thinks something, then is it really your place to say it? This statement almost feels like the introduction of some sort of gossip or hearsay that could be questionable. Or it could be interpreted as coming from someone else that may be questionable. If you take such a tact, you really open the



door for the person to discount what you have to say. If you have feedback to give, provide it and hold the conversation about what needs to change, don’t attempt you soften a message that you need to deliver in this way.

“Of course, as you know...” This statement is a corollary to the first phrase above. If you are telling them something that they don’t know, they will not admit it. Then they will not ask you questions about what you are saying because they won’t want to admit what they don’t know. If that is the case, then you stymie their ability to make sure that they have clearly understood. Again, it would be better to ask them questions than to assume they know and then tell them what they don’t know.

“Are you open to some feedback?” I

remember when one of my first managers would say this. In my mind I would say to myself, “No I am not open to your feedback!” When you begin with this question, the person hearing it would naturally assume the worst and then resist the message that you would like to give.

There is a much easier way to begin a conversation. I would suggest that you use an Attention Check to gain the attention of your listener. It might sound something like this, “I would like to talk about how we could do some fabulous work together. Can we talk for a minute?” An Attention Check is nothing more than making a statement of intention followed by asking for their permission to hold the conversation. Beginning a conversation by engaging your listener is a great way to initiate any conversation.

By avoiding the phrases discussed above, you can hold more effective conversations and ensure that your listener will be more engaged and open about the information that you seek.

For a copy of the original document and other similar articles, go to [Dialogue Works](#). Reprinted from the August 23, 2016 NRPA Smart Brief.





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Vermont Senior Games - 5 Events Remaining in the 2016 Games Season

The Vermont Senior Games Association (VSGA) has had a busy summer competition season, with 17 state championship events between May and October. It takes lots of partners to pull off a schedule like this. Special thanks to the following Parks & Recreation Departments who shared their facilities and/or allowed us to qualify our Vermont senior athletes for the 2017 National Senior Games at their events: Burlington Parks & Recreation (Bocce), Colchester Parks & Recreation (Triathlon), Rutland Recreation & Parks (Mountain Biking), Shelburne Parks & Recreation (Pickleball and Table Tennis), and the Quechee Club (Tennis).

There is still time to register for the following VT Senior Games competitions:

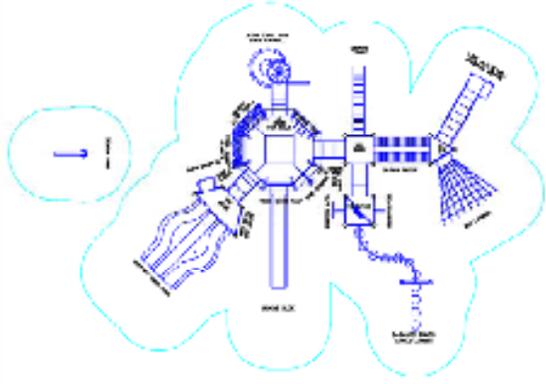
- » Golf - September 20th at VT National Country Club, South Burlington
- » Basketball – September 30th at Castleton University
- » 10K Road Race – October 1st at Shelburne Town Beach
- » Table Tennis – October 8th at Shelburne Town Offices
- » Billiards – October 9th at Moose Lodge, St. Johnsbury

Go to www.vermontseniorgames.org for event details and registration information. The VSGA events are open to anyone aged 50 and older, Vermont residents and out-of-staters too.

Vermont Senior Games athletes "gear up" for the 2016 Mountain Bike competition in Rutland on June 11, 2016.



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A Pickleball Primer

By Ron Tofani, USAPA Ambassador-at-Large

What's Pickleball? It's a game that was contrived by combining several paddle - racquet sports such as tennis, ping pong, badminton, racquetball and paddle tennis.

The game was conceived in the State of Washington in the mid-sixties when some Bainbridge Island summer residents were looking for an activity to keep family and friends healthfully occupied. Upon looking at a nearby badminton court, they lined out that size court (20' x 44') on a driveway, took a net and dropped it to 34" at center, located a couple of ping pong paddles and a wiffleball and started hitting back and forth. As they played, rules and scoring evolved and soon the neighbors and passersby were stopping in and waiting their turn to play this game with no name. Now the name is a story in itself. As lore has it, the wiffleball would disappear at times while they were playing. What do you think the family dog's name was? Pickles, of course, and the ball was his.

The game spread rapidly in the west and northwest and around the country as retirees returned home to teach their new game to friends. Folks with reasonable mobility can easily pick up the basic game and be playing after a lesson or two. It's

not unusual to see grandkids playing with or against their parents and grandparents. Pickleball is now being played throughout the US, in Canada and many other countries.

The court measures twenty feet wide by forty-four feet long with a net height of thirty-four inches at center. There is a line seven feet back from the net on each side with the area within called the "non-volley zone". This area is most often referred to as the "Kitchen". In this zone, players are not allowed to hit a ball in the air, also known as a volley.

Most pickleball in Vermont is played on tennis courts with the pickleball lines painted a different color and the center net lowered two inches. Introductory clinics, with equipment provided, are offered throughout Vermont. Games are played both singles and doubles with doubles being most popular. Scoring goes to eleven or fifteen points with the winner having to win by two. Games usually last ten to twenty minutes.

There seem to be plenty of places to play pickleball in good weather in Vermont. However, players are continually looking for new places to play indoors during the fall and winter months.

Throughout the country and here in Vermont, pickleball is growing at a fast



Around the State...



pace. In 2016, pickleball was the largest event hosted by the Vermont Senior Games with 87 competitors taking to the courts in Shelburne on June 17th and 18th.

The governing body for Pickleball is the USAPA. United States of America Pickleball Association. For a moderate annual membership fee, they provide members with assistance in beginning clinics, maintaining a list of places to play, a monthly newsletter and running sanctioned tournaments allowing players to get ratings. Some national tournaments now offer cash prizes.

USAPA also offers instruction in refereeing, instructing, rule interpretation, etc. More can be learned at www.usapa.org.

An informal group of Vermont pickleballers is trying to get an idea of how many folks are playing in Vermont. We would appreciate having contact information for the pickleball organizers in your area. Please contact Ron Tofani at rontof@gmail.com or 802-355-2005.





Around the State...

The Quechee Club Hosts Vermont Senior Games State Tennis Championships

By Donna Griffin, USTA VT President and VT Senior Games Tennis Sports Coordinator

The Vermont Senior Games State Tennis Championship was held at The Quechee Club in Quechee, Vermont on August 27th & 28th. Thirty-two tennis players, ages 50-84, competed in doubles, singles and mixed doubles. The Quechee Club was an excellent venue with outstanding views and the weather fully cooperated. Thanks go to volunteers Hannelore Boerner, Marti Powers, and Janet Nunziata for their contributions to

the event and to The Quechee Club for hosting the event.

All of the participants qualified for the 2017 National Senior Games in the three main events with 9 people qualifying in two events. The National Senior Games will be held next June in Birmingham, Alabama. They are held every other year. In 2015, Vermont had 47 athletes participate in the National Senior Games in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Russ Colvin (left), winner of the 65-69 men's singles and Donna Griffin, USTA VT President



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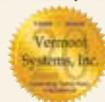
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* Refer to the description of each classification listed on page 2 of this membership application.
 ** Please list all names & contact information for agency and board memberships on the next page. Thanks!

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

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

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Is there a VRPA member who influenced your decision to join? If yes, who? _____ Are you a member of NRPA? Yes No

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 Completed registration forms can be emailed to info@vrpa.org. Please keep a copy.