



Winter 2023

REC CONNECT NEWSLETTER



Message from Executive Director

Happy New Year to all! It was great seeing so many of you at the NNERPC earlier in January. The photo above was from the NHRPA Annual Meeting at the conference. Great to see a mix of new and familiar faces this year.

I am happy to announce that in 2023 NHRPA will celebrate the theme of "Attitude of Gratitude" reminding us all to be grateful each and every day. Each newsletter and email update will include a quote, article or reminder about practicing gratitude daily.

The new year brings new programs and social events for our members. I hope you all mark your calendars for our first ever Summer Camp Summit being sponsored by our friends at Primex. More information on this new event is included in the newsletter. The NHRPA Awards will be handed out at the end of the summit so please make sure you consider nominating a fellow professional for an award.

Lots of great things coming this year for NHRPA and remember that we are always looking for new faces to join committees and get involved to strengthen our association. If you like numbers... we will be looking for a new treasurer next election so reach out to current NHRPA treasurer Arene Berry for more information on this important role!

Thank you to everyone who contributed this newsletter. The spring Rec Connect Newsletter deadline is Friday, April 7, 2023.

Kerry Horne M.Ed., Executive Director, NHRPA

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Happy Reading!!!

2023 NHRPA

Theme:
*Attitude of
Gratitude*

NHRPA PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Greetings NHRPA Members

I hope that you all had a wonderful holiday season and your New Year's has started out on a high note. It was great to see so many people turn out for the NHRPA Holiday Social at Fun Spot on December 8th. I think it was probably one of the largest turnouts that we have had at that social. A special thank you to Herb Greene for organizing the event.

I wasn't able to attend this year's Northern New England Parks & Recreation Conference but have heard there was some really speakers this year.

In the coming weeks, you will be seeing the return of our online Zoom coffee chat training sessions. You will also be seeing information about a new one day workshop that we are currently planning that we have dubbed the "Summer Camp Summit". Many communities run summer camp programs and so this workshop is going to be geared towards Directors & Program Coordinators with the goal of helping you to provide standard best practices in your camp programs this summer. Save the date of Thursday April 13th and we will be getting details about this training out to you shortly.

As part of the Summer Camp Summit event, we are also going to be holding the Annual NHRPA Awards Ceremony. The Awards Committee is currently accepting applications for this year's awards. Please take a moment to review the various awards that NHRPA gives out and consider nominating to receive one of these awards. There are lots of great programs and deserving individuals out there and we want to make sure we tout their accomplishments. The nomination process is designed to be very simple and can be submitted online. Information about all of the awards can be found on the NHRPA website by going to: <https://www.nhrpa.com/NHRPA-Awards>. The deadline to submit a nomination is March 1st.

Our regions across the State are starting to get active again and if you have never attended a regional meeting, I would encourage you to join in. It's a great way to network with fellow professionals as well as to brainstorm ideas and solutions to common problems. If you are unsure of who your District Representative is; you can find their contact information on the NHRPA website at: <https://www.nhrpa.com/NHRPA-Districts>

I hope you all have a successful winter season. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the direction of NHRPA or if there is any way that the Association can better serve you.

Respectfully Submitted, Matt Casparius, CPRE
NHRPA President, mcasparius@merrimacknh.gov

NHRPA Executive Board

President: Matt Casparius
Merrimack Parks & Recreation

President Elect: David Tovey
Exeter Parks & Recreation

Secretary | Tara Tower
Lincoln Woodstock Recreation

Treasurer | Arene Berry
Milford Recreation

Past President | Craig Fraley
Amherst Parks & Recreation

NHRPA Board Members

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Concord Parks & Recreation

Justin Chaffee
Ossipee Parks & Recreation

Eric Feldbaum
Division of Parks & Recreation

John Kohlmorgen
Jaffrey Recreation

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."
- John F. Kennedy

NHRPA Calendar of Events—to see the full calendar or events [CLICK HERE](#)

February 16, 2023

NHRPA Coffee Talk with Bob Barcelona, Clemson University

March 9, 2023

NHRPA Business Meeting & Skiing Social @ Cannon Mountain

April 7, 2023

Deadline Spring Newsletter

April 13, 2024

Summer Camp Summit & NHRPA Awards & Primex

Aquatics Virtual Discussion via Zoom



Join your fellow Recreation professionals to discuss all things aquatics! This one hour virtual discussion will happen every other Tuesday from February 7th—May 16th at 12:30pm. This is a round table format hosted by Arene Berry, Director Milford Parks & Recreation

Registration is not required—feel free to join in the meeting when it works best for you!

Zoom link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89996253703?pwd=Q0piRHVlOVZlZDM4RzJXTlVlYQkNGUT09>

Meeting ID: 899 9625 3703

Passcode: 686607



Herb Greene, Gilford Parks & Recreation– Bunny Hop Story Walk

The Bunny Hop Story Walk is a combined story walk and egg hunt. We first created this program in 2021 as a way to offer a socially distant egg hunt and participants enjoyed it so much we offered it again this year. The little kids enjoy the story and love having the opportunity to hunt for a couple eggs at each story page location.

When is a “Volunteer” a True Volunteer?

Anna B. Cole, Esq.

Municipal recreation departments rely on teams of volunteers to make their programs function. Recreation programs are often dependent on the parents and community members who routinely sign up to coach sports leagues, supervise trips, assist with large annual events like Fourth of July or Halloween, and engage in similar civic activities. Questions are often raised regarding the status of these workers. Are they entitled to the protections provided to employees or are they volunteers? Does it make a difference if they otherwise work for the same municipality (e.g., a parent who volunteers to coach for the Town’s flag football league but also works as a police officer within the Town’s Police Department)?

In general, individuals who perform services for an employer are considered employees. Employees, unless they are otherwise exempt as defined by the law, are entitled to receive minimum wage for every hour worked (i.e., \$7.25/hour) and overtime compensation in accordance with federal and state wage and hour law. However, the applicable federal and state laws include an exception that allow governmental employers, including towns and cities, to accept services from individuals who do not need to be paid. Specifically, a worker may be classified as a “volunteer” if the individual voluntarily and without coercion performs “hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered.” 29 C.F.R. 553.101(a), (c).

As indicated by the rule outlined above, volunteers cannot be paid for their work, as receiving compensation is viewed as directly contrary to the nature of volunteerism. This does not mean, however, that volunteers are prohibited from receiving any reimbursement or honorarium for their services. The law permits volunteers to be paid for their expenses (travel, lodging, wear and tear on clothing, meals, etc.), reasonable benefits (including certain insurance benefits), a nominal fee, or any combination thereof, for their service without losing their status as volunteers. If a parent or community member, who does not otherwise work for the municipality, seeks to volunteer with a recreational program, the analysis is relatively simple. Those volunteer services can be accepted with little risk of wage and hour liability so long as the individual offers their services voluntarily and the documentation clearly establishes that they will not receive compensation other than reimbursement for expenses or a nominal fee.

Federal and State laws do not deny public employees the opportunity to provide volunteer services to their community. However, the employer cannot accept volunteer services from its employees unless they (a) otherwise qualify as a volunteer (as outlined above) and (b) the volunteer services are not the “same type of services” that the employees regularly perform for the public employer. 29 C.F.R. 553.101(d). Before accepting a Town-employee’s offer to volunteer the Recreation Department should, likely in consultation with Human Resources, carefully analyze any similarities between the employee’s regular work and the services they are offering to perform on a volunteer basis. If the work is sufficiently dissimilar, then the Town may be able to properly classify the hours spent providing services for the Recreation Department as volunteer hours and, as a result, not include those hours when calculating the individual’s entitlement to receive pay (straight time and overtime) for the work they perform for the Town in their regular job. For example, depending on the specific circumstances, it is likely that a Town police officer could legitimately volunteer to be a coach or referee within a sports league within the Town’s Recreation Department because it is unlikely that the individual’s police work would be found to be “the same type of services” as the volunteer work.

Alternatively, if the volunteer work is the same type of services as the individual’s regular job for the Town, such as a member of the Town’s public works department who offers to mow the Recreation Department’s fields on his off-day during a volunteer “clean-up day,” then the Town would be wise to either decline the offer or, if accepted, include the hours spent performing that offered service as regular work time (at either straight or overtime rates, depending on the circumstances).

When accepting volunteers, it is a best practice to utilize clear volunteer agreements stating that the individual is voluntarily providing services and confirming that they do not expect, and will not receive, compensation for their services, and then further detailing any other expectations, such as compliance with rules while functioning in the volunteer capacity. If a non-exempt employee of the Town is providing volunteer services, it would be prudent to ensure the Town’s human resources Department is aware of the arrangement so that it can be vetted from a wage and hour perspective and, assuming it is deemed permissible, the volunteer agreement should be amended to clearly state that the volunteer services are not the same type of services the individual regularly provides to the Town through their employment.

Anna Cole is a labor and employment attorney with Drummond Woodsum. She represents public and private employers navigate the ever-changing landscape of state and federal labor and employment laws.

This is not a legal document nor is it intended to serve as legal advice or a legal opinion. Drummond Woodsum & MacMahon, P.A. makes no representations that this is a complete or final description or procedure that would ensure legal compliance and does not intend that the reader should rely on it as such.



REGISTRATION OPEN

Granite State 90-Day Winter Challenge

February 1st – April 30th

The Granite State 90 Day Winter Challenge is to be physically active for 30 minutes or more every day in the months of February, March, and April. Walk, snowshoe, ski, build a snowman, join an online fitness class – move however you like for 30 minutes! Participants may register with a buddy or a team.

Keeping Track

Download our [Activity Calendars online](#) to check-off each day you exercise for at least 30 minutes. This calendar is for your own personal fitness tracking. At the end of each month, email your completed calendar to nhgcpah@gmail.com for a chance to win a raffle prize.

Show us what you Discover

Post what you find during your activity on our [Facebook](#) page. Share a great spot you never knew was so close or a positive experience you had during your activity.

Use one of our Tags: [#NHMoves](#) | [#GranitesState90Day](#) | [@nhgcpah](#)

Amazing Prizes!

Complete the 90 Day challenge and you could win one of the below:

- NH Business Gift Certificates
- Water Bottles
- Neck, Face, Head Buffs
- Duffle Bag with goodies and MORE!

Click Here
TO REGISTER!



Alyssa Porto, Newmarket Recreation - The Backyard Bash

In 2022 we ran our very first Annual Backyard Bash event for the town of Newmarket. This event combined everyone's favorite things: music, backyard games, food trucks, the splash pad and of course a beer tent. We were blown away by seeing over 2000+ community members come out on a hot summer day to support all of the local organizations in town and have fun.



Coffee Talk with Bob Barcelona, Clemson University

Thursday, February 16, 2023 @ 9am



Mark your calendar for Coffee Talk with Bob Barcelona, Clemson University. Bob will review latest insights and trends in Recreation. The zoom link is in your email confirmation.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



For over 50 years the department of Recreation Management & Policy has been educating students in Therapeutic Recreation, Program Event Management, and Outdoor Leadership Management. Our alumni have been thriving in a variety of industries such as Municipal Parks and Recreation, the Ski industry, Adventure-based experiences, Therapeutic Recreation, and the events industry.

On Friday March 3rd, 2023, UNH RMP is hosting a mountain takeover at Gunstock Mountain Resort in Gilford, NH. RMP will be celebrating 50 years of impacting the recreation economy in New Hampshire and beyond. This event will be open to the public and we will be highlighting recreation in the region. The event will include mountain activities, trivia, free snow tubing, discounted tickets, NASTAR races, a partner expo, giveaways, prizes, food, refreshments, music, and more.

Use the link below to register by February 16th.

<https://bit.ly/RMP50th>



University of New Hampshire
Recreation Management & Policy



JOIN THE UNH RMP COMMUNITY AT GUNSTOCK MOUNTAIN RESORT FOR A DAY FULL OF ACTIVITIES!

DISCOUNTED LIFT TICKETS

DISCOUNTED NORDIC TICKETS

FREE SNOW TUBING

PICTURES WITH WILD E. CAT

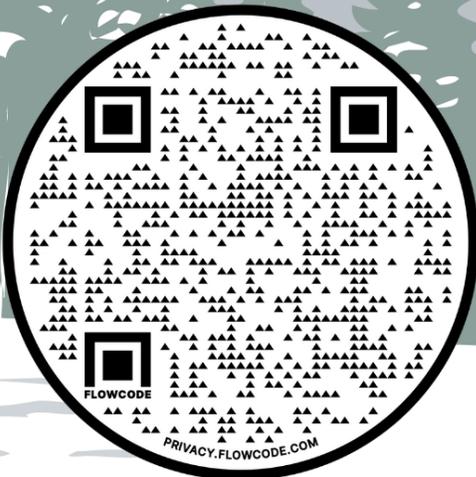
NASTAR RACE COURSE

PRIZES

RECOGNITION

SNACKS

TRIVIA



**REGISTER BY
FEB 16TH**

<https://bit.ly/RMP50th>



Schedule of Events

9:00am – 11:00am	Check in
9:00am – 9:00pm	Mountain Activities [Downhill Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, Snow Shoeing]
9:00am – 1:00pm	NASTAR
11:30am – 1:00pm	Trivia w/Prizes!
1:00pm – 3:00pm	S'Mores & Hot Cocoa
1:00pm – 3:00pm	Partner Expo
1:00pm – 3:00pm	Pictures w/Mascots
2:00pm – 4:00pm	FREE Snow Tubing
3:00pm – 5:00pm	Recognition / Apps

[In the Powder Keg: Light refreshments, Cash Bar]



Andy Bohannon

Keene Parks & Recreation

Ashuelot River Park - Art Stacks

During COVID the Ashuelot Park Advisory Board wished to create more public art in the park. They enlisted the art teacher from Franklin School and the Board funded a project so that every student to could be a part of. The stacks are reflective of various student perspectives of what the park means to them. It was truly a great night to watch the students show their parents and grandparents what they had created and knowing it will be there for a long time to come.



NHRPA Diversity Statement Draft

Special thanks to Andy Bohannon and Donna Kuethe for drafting this statement for NHRPA. If you have feedback on this statement please send to executivedirector@nhrpa.com. The NHRPA Executive Board will vote to adopt our diversity statement at the March Business Meeting.

“New Hampshire Recreation and Parks Association is committed to making diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging a priority towards achieving our mission. We strive to accomplish these common ideals for the betterment of our membership and the communities that they serve.”



Pettinelli & Associates is a recreational design firm that has been supplying quality products and service in Vermont, New Hampshire and Northern New York for more than 15 years.

We offer site evaluations and assistance to help your group with every step towards building and enjoying a quality play environment.



For information contact Bob Pettinelli

1-800-775-8153 or email: playgrdbob@aol.com

<http://pettinelliandassociates.com/>



JT Clough, Milford Recreation — Senior Trip: Fuller Gardens

It was a hot day in August but completely worth it! We got to attend the botanical gardens right off of the ocean and afterward we went to lunch at one of the local seafood restaurants.



We Are Back...In A BIG Way!



BRAVE THE COLD AND EARN BRAGGING RIGHTS BY TAKING THE PLUNGE TO SUPPORT MORE THAN 3,000 SPECIAL OLYMPICS NEW HAMPSHIRE ATHLETES ACROSS THE GRANITE STATE!



PENGUIN PLUNGE
HAMPTON BEACH, NH **FEBRUARY 12**

WE ARE RETURNING TO THE BEACH AND OUR SIGHTS ARE SET ON MAKING 2023 OUR BIGGEST AND BEST YEAR YET!



JOIN US AS WE PARTY LIKE IT IS 1999!!



PLUNGE in a big way EITHER WAY in 2023!
Do-it-Yourself or In Person!



SCAN HERE TO REGISTER NOW!



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SONH.ORG



NHRPA March Business Meeting & Ski Social @ Cannon Mountain, Franconia NH Thursday, March 9, 2023

More information and registration coming soon!



Wendy Werner, Holderness Recreation - SummerEscape

Just so thankful for our great staff last summer. They were so creative and got along so well with each other and the participants. This was just a great photo at our Talent Day and they smiled like that most of the summer.

Primex Trainings

2023 TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Webinar: Use of Facilities: Best Practices to Minimize Your Risk

WHEN: Thursday, February 16, 2023 ■ 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

PRESENTER: Monica Panait, Risk Management Services Manager

This interactive webinar is designed to provide attendees with tools towards effectively transferring risk, minimizing liability exposure, and empowering them to feel more confident when coordinating the use of facilities on behalf of their public entities – this will be accomplished by sharing best risk management practices that all public entities could easily implement. Logistics such as use of facility agreements, certificates of coverage and the significance of being an Additional Insured, staff training, and many examples will be explored during this session.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain a better understanding of the basics of liability coverage and its applicability to the use of your facilities
- Identify steps and best practices to better manage the use of your public facilities
- Implement best practices

Who should attend:

Town and City Managers/ Administrators, School Superintendents, Business Administrators, Principals, Recreation Directors, HR Personnel, Finance Directors, County/Nursing Home Administrators, Facilities Directors, or any other personnel involved in managing the use of your public facilities by third parties.



Monica Panait - Monica has been with Primex³ since 2001. She holds a leading role in the Risk Management Services department, supervising and mentoring risk management consultants and other staff in conjunction with the Director of Risk Management. She continues to work with Primex³ school and county members to address their training, consulting, and risk management needs. Monica holds several industry designations such as Certified Risk Manager (CRM) and Certified School Risk Manager (CSR) through the National Alliance for Insurance Education and Research and has earned the Program in General Insurance (INS) certification through the American Institute for CPCU and Insurance Institute of America. She is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Monica's areas of expertise include loss mitigation in conjunction with the development of a risk management plan, advising regarding complex liability issues, reinsurance negotiation and placement, training development and delivery, and playground safety.



Technical Requirements:
Each participant needs to be able to access and navigate in an online Zoom environment requiring internet access, an email address, and the ability to function in a secure virtual meeting platform.



This event is available to members in the Property Liability program.



Online Trainings:

- 2023 Preventing Workplace Harassment for Employees (1hr)
- Calming the Storm: How to De-Escalate Emotionally Charged Encounters (2hrs)
- Playground Safety: Pre-recorded Webinar (1hr)
- Identifying and Responding to Aggressive Human Behavior (1hr)
- February 16th Live Webinar - 10:00am - 11:00 am - Use of Facilities: Minimizing Your Liability Exposure

In-Person Trainings:

- March 7th - 9:00am - 12:00pm - Performance Improvement Strategies
- April 26th - 9:00am - 12:00pm - Leading with Confidence

Ryan Tumminello

Ben Shaffer Recreation - Deer Path Park

This Ben Shaffer Recreation project brings every element of play into consideration. With three separate playgrounds, we were able to incorporate a play space for all ages and abilities. This is a 2022 favored project because of the prevailing inclusivity and extensive play capacity. From the outdoor musical instruments, the Brava Universal Swing, poured in place surfacing, Movement Inclusive game, Kid force Spinner, and so much more. Being able to bring fun and safe play to all children is no small feat, and we are proud to say we've achieved that at the Deer Path Park!



For more information contact Ryan at ryan@benshaffer.com



NHRPA Summer Camp Summit followed by NHRPA Awards

Thursday, April 13, 2023

@ Primex

Join NHRPA for a full day dedicated to summer camp safety followed by the NHRPA Awards! Primex will host this event at their facility in Concord and registration will be limited to 50 participants. We are working with Primex to finalize the program and plan to open registration soon! This will be a great day of learning so make sure you save the date!

NHRPA Awards

Have you taken a moment and checked out the NHRPA awards page? If not, now is the time to nominate a co-worker or colleague for an NHRPA Award!

Awards Application Deadline March 1st, 2023

[CLICK HERE](#) and you will find description and application for all NHRPA Awards. If you have any questions please email Krystal Alpers kalpers@franklinnh.org.

***What are you waiting for?
Nominate someone TODAY!***



***Thank you Funspot for
hosting the NHRPA
Holiday Social!***



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Mark Gallagher | **800.861.1209** | mark@nerecgroup.com
P.O. Box 1503 Westboro, MA

The **FUN** PASS

The Breathe New Hampshire Fun Pass 2023 Coupon Book is back!!!

NHRPA is once again partnering with Breathe NH to sell Fun Pass Books! Each book costs \$40 and NHRPA will receive **\$6 for each book sold** as a fundraiser! All you have to do is share the information in your newsletter and website. NHRPA has a link (see below) and participants order a book and pay using the NH Recreation & Parks link and the book is shipped directly to the participant! It couldn't be easier. Sample language for your newsletters or websites is listed below along with a few pictures.

Buy a 2023 Fun Pass Coupon Book & Save All Year Long!

For only \$40, save up to \$2,000 at more than 100 New England family attractions. Favorites like Story Land, Mount Washington Cog Railway, Pats Peak, Ragged Mountain Resort, Whale's Tale Water Park, Altitude Trampoline Park, and many more are in the book! There are 18 new attractions too!

Most coupons admit a child 12 and under free or at a discounted rate with a paying adult. Story Land offers a BOGO (Buy One, Get One Free) so with just that one coupon, you cover the cost of the entire book. Offers and deals vary by attraction.

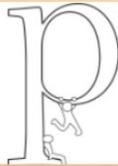
Purchasing a Fun Pass saves you lots of money AND, you are supporting the New Hampshire Recreation and Parks Association (NHRPA), Breathe New Hampshire, and local attractions too!

To see how much you can save and to place your order, go to:

[NH Recreation & Parks.](#)



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- SPRAY PARK / SPLASH PAD
- DOG PARKS
- BLEACHERS



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Contact Us: premierparkplay@verizon.net

3 Programs and the Truth

Written by: Andy Bohannon, Director Keene Parks & Recreation & Facilities

It was once said by country music legend Harlan Howard the best way to describe country music is “Three Cords and the Truth,” and if you ever listen to the lyrics, it’s the truth. It was not until college when I was mostly forced to listen to country music. It was when working at the administrative assistant’s desk at the Recreation Center at night time and turning on the radio, as there were no iPod’s, smart phones, or our own laptops, heck there wasn’t even the internet yet! If you changed the channel on the dial, Anita quickly reminded you not to touch her station, so we were forced to listen. It kind of grew on you, and before I knew it, I was listening to music filled with “three cords and the truth.” What happens when you apply this same theory to our profession, can we as Parks and Recreation professionals look at what we do and say “Three Programs and the Truth”? Well, I think so, if you think about it, take your three most popular programs and look deep into what they say about your Department. I can almost guarantee you will find the truth about how you are doing, who you are and who you serve, where you are going, and what is happening in your community. Let’s look at three varied programs to discover our truth.

Youth Soccer: Pretty much everyone runs a fall youth soccer program, and if you have a strong program, you have great volunteers who are well trained, buy into your philosophy, communicate well with you and your other coaches, parents and most importantly give positive feedback to rising soccer players. Parents and players arrive at your field and know where they are. The area is well marked, the nets are well maintained, and the field is mowed. They share what a great time they are having and even might give you a thank you. The registration process was seamless and your team delivered a positive customer experience. Every volunteer coach, parent and player can’t wait for next year as you gave them everything you had. If you ask the five questions above, it seems you are delivering a strong program, and most importantly, your community appreciates the work you do. The truth comes when inevitably you can’t please everyone, and they might share a criticism. This usually hurts, but if you are open to it, it might be the truth and you didn’t want to hear it. It’s hard to listen to, but remember that “thank you” and build on how you can improve. That will tell you where you are going. If you are not willing to reflect, accept, and share a vision, look for more truthful moments on the horizon.

Pickleball: A relatively new sport, yet it is the fastest growing sport in the United States. This sport has mainly attracted the senior population as they rekindle their competitive edge. As if it wasn't hard enough to deal with youth sports, we now have every age group needing high levels of attention. If you have adapted, you are keeping up with the trends and keeping your facilities and programs in tune with your community's needs. As the sport grows, you are also see more age groups participating and the demand continues to rise to build and convert more courts. With various funding programs flush with cash, do you attempt to build new courts, or build a new community center for year round indoor play? It's a perfect time to go back or create a master plan. In addition, your master plan will help accelerate an LWCF application providing justification and community engagement. So, will your department gain the truth, or will you score an ace keep everybody happy and out of the kitchen?

Trails: Almost every community has a trail, most have many, and perhaps lucky enough to have a rail trail. How is your community promoting your trails? They were easily your most utilized resource during the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you have your trails well marked, mapped for easy navigation on paper and online, consistent signage at your trail heads guaranteeing your users have a positive experience? If you don't, then the truth will play out. Residents will visit the community nearby, and what does that mean for your town? In some cases, they might enjoy a meal, fill up on gas, and find more reasons not to use the trails you have. They could promote another community's trails, and worse, they could donate to improve it. In a blink, your community is losing out on the benefits of a strong trail system.

And the Truth: Parks and Recreation departments are the health and wellness of our communities. It is vital to stay ahead of the trends, network to a larger community, and keep our departments from becoming stale. As in a country song, find your three programs that you can review with detail, determine how you can improve them, and you will find your truth on how you are doing. And as Harlan Howard shared in his music, you're community will give you "Three Cheers for the Good Guys!"



**Save
the
Date**



NHRPA State Conference

Thursday, October 19, 2023

@ Concord Parks & Recreation Community Center

The advertisement for SGS TURF CARE features a blue and green color scheme. The logo consists of the letters 'SGS' in blue and brown, with a green plant sprout above the 'S'. To the right, 'TURF CARE' is written in large green letters. Below the logo, three services are listed: 'Lawn Care', 'Irrigation', and 'Athletic Fields', each accompanied by a blue water drop icon. At the bottom, the phone number '603-660-6061', a Facebook icon, and the website 'www.sgsnh.net' are displayed.

SGS TURF CARE

Lawn Care **Irrigation** **Athletic Fields**

603-660-6061 [f](#) www.sgsnh.net



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Play shapes us. That's why we want to help you create the playground of your dreams. Wherever your ideas come from, whatever your vision, we can bring it to life with our unparalleled design capabilities. **Learn more by contacting your local playground consultant, O'Brien & Sons, Inc. at 508.359.4200.**

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www.obrienandsons.com

2023 “Wink” Tapply Playground Leaders Workshop

The 2023 “Wink” Tapply Playground Leaders Workshop is gearing up to be a great one! The workshop is scheduled for Saturday, June 3rd at the Bessie Rowell Community Center in Franklin, NH from 8:30am-3:30pm. A light breakfast and Lunch will be provided in the registration cost which is \$30/pp. We have some great new speakers and some returners coming back to deliver sessions. We will follow the same format as last year of educational sessions in the morning and then move onto some camp challenges! To wrap up the day, we will serve up ice cream sundaes and raffle off some prizes!

Registrants also have a chance to win one of (2) \$25 gift cards!

Look for more updates through the NHRPA website in early March. Registration will up on the NHRPA website mid-April!

We hope you can join us for a fun-filled and informative workshop!

Practicing Gratitude

Source: National Institute of Health

How often do you feel thankful for the good things in your life? Studies suggest that making a habit of noticing what's going well in your life could have health benefits.

Taking the time to feel gratitude may improve your emotional well-being by helping you cope with stress. Early research suggests that a daily practice of gratitude could affect the body, too. For example, one study found that gratitude was linked to fewer signs of heart disease.

The first step in any gratitude practice is to reflect on the good things that have happened in your life. These can be big or little things. It can be as simple as scoring a good parking space that day or enjoying a hot mug of coffee. Or, perhaps you feel grateful for a close friend's compassionate support.

Next, allow yourself a moment to enjoy that you had the positive experience, no matter what negatives may exist in your life. Let positive feelings of gratitude bubble up.

"We encourage people to try practicing gratitude daily," advises Dr. Judith T. Moskowitz, a psychologist at Northwestern University. "You can try first thing in the morning or right before you fall asleep, whatever is best for you."

Moskowitz has been studying the impact of keeping a daily gratitude journal on stress relief and health. Practicing gratitude is part of a set of skills that her research team encourages people to practice. These skills have been shown to help some people increase their positive emotions.

Her team is trying to better understand how a daily boost in positive emotions can help people cope with stress and improve their mental and physical health.

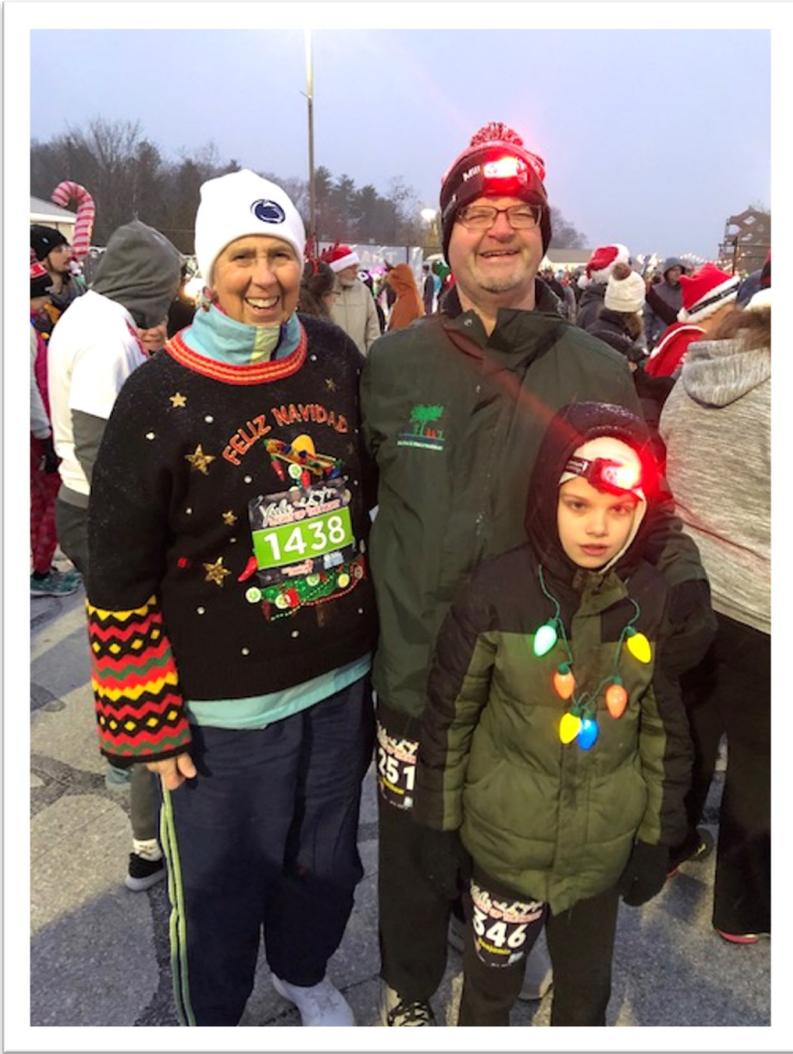
"By practicing these skills, it will help you cope better with whatever you have to cope with," Moskowitz explains. "You don't have to be experiencing major life stress. It also works with the daily stress that we all deal with. Ultimately, it can help you be not just happier but also healthier."

While practicing gratitude seems to work for some people, it doesn't for everyone. That's why Moskowitz's research team teaches other skills, too. These include meditating and doing small acts of kindness.

Her team has been developing and testing these skills with people who have illnesses like advanced cancer, diabetes, HIV infection, and depression. She's also worked with people who care for others with serious illness.

When you make gratitude a regular habit, it can help you learn to recognize good things in your life despite the bad things that might be happening. Moskowitz says that when you're under stress, you might not notice all the moments of positive emotion that you experience. With her research program, she's trying to help people become more aware of those moments of positive feelings.

"Put some effort into experiencing gratitude on a daily basis and see how it goes," Moskowitz advises. "It might just surprise you that—despite how bad things are—there are things you feel grateful for alongside it." And feeling grateful may help improve both your mind and your body.



NHRPA President, Matt Casparius and son, Ben with NHRPA member Donna Kuethe before the start of the Light the Night road race at the Festival of Lights at the NH Motor Speedway in Loudon on December 11th. Matt has participated in this race before and is a regular road race competitor. Donna “used” to run in 5k races though hadn’t done so in awhile, but thought it would be fun and a great way to see the incredible display of lights, up close and personal. In spite of registering as runner, Donna thought she’d walk the course, but reports that “once I had a number and knew they were timing it, something came over me and had to run – at least most of it. Came in 5th in my division - there might have only been 5 people entered in that division, but there might have been more...” Matt reports that Ben thought the idea was to sprint most of the 2.1 miles. Regardless, it really was fun and a great perspective on the lights. The light snow falling throughout the race added to the festivities.

Granite State Track and Field

Submitted by: Donna Kuethe, Co-chair GSTF



The Granite State Track and Field Committee is gearing up to offer this very successful state-wide youth track and field program again this year. The committee is ready to meet and begin the process of reaching out to potential sponsors, recruiting teams to participate, securing the dates and venues for the district and state meet and doing our best to make sure that the 2023 events are as incredibly special to NH's young athletes as they have been in the past. We hope to continue to grow the program by welcoming back some communities who may not have participated in the past or the past few years. One of our goals is to return to our pre-pandemic participation numbers – and beyond.

Just a brief review of Granite State Track and Field, a program of the New Hampshire Recreation and Park Association. GSTF is a statewide track and field experience for boys and girls ages 9-14. Age breakdowns are: 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 with boy's and girl's divisions. The focus is on fun, fitness, friendship and sportsmanship. For the most part the program is offered at the local level through New Hampshire's municipal Parks and Recreation Departments, although a few are offered through local running or outing clubs. How the local programs are organized vary from community to community. Some offer a comprehensive youth track program, with local meets, while others organize teams primarily for the District meets, organized and run by NHRPA's GSTF committee, and held on a Saturday in mid-June. Those athletes who finish in the top 4 places in their events and division at the two District Meet advance to the State Final, traditionally on Friday evening at the end of June. At the state meet they are competing for the title of "State Champion". Those who qualify for the state meet are recognized with the much loved and sought-after Granite State Track and Field State Finalist T-shirts and ribbons signifying their place. Those athletes who finish in first place at the State Meet are recognized as a State Champions and receive a dry-weave shirt identifying them as a champion – also much loved and sought after. GSTF shirts are worn with pride for years.

In all three meets every effort is made to make the event exceptionally special for the athletes. The meets begin with a Parade of Athletes. We provide professional timing services, meets are announced, top finishers recognized. Our volunteers go out of their way to make the day special for the youth participants, patiently assisting, cheering on the athletes, taking the extra time with measuring distances, starting races, and ensuring events run smoothly and fairly. Spectators and other athletes cheer on all the athletes.

To offer a successful track and field experience takes much work and we are always looking for more NHRPA members to join our committee and/or volunteer at the meets. If you have questions, would like to volunteer as a committee member or meet day volunteer, please contact one of the following Donna Kuethe at recgoddess@myfairpoint.net ; Paul Coats at paul.coats@lebanonnh.gov or Dan MacLean at tcc@metrocast.net





**Research, Education, and Development
for Health, Recreation, and Land Agencies**

GP RED and Active Living Research Offer the Active Living Conference

The 2023 Active Living Conference will be held March 13-16 on the campus of the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. The deadline for the early bird registration is January 31, 2023.

According to GP RED, “the Active Living Conference is a result of an alliance between Active Living Research and GP RED to co-host and coordinate a community driven event for sharing the latest research, policies and practices that advance activity-friendly communities for everyone.” The schedule is quite full, with a large number of presentations, panel discussions, speed sessions, poster sessions delving into a vast number of subjects related to providing active programs, services and communities. Just a small sampling of topics being addressed include, “Making the Economic Case for Activity Friendly Places”; “National Youth Sports Strategy Workshop: Collaborating to Improve Youth Sports”; “Utilizing Technology to Provide Innovative Park Experiences”; “The Influence of Playgrounds on Children’s Health” and many, many more.

The overall theme of the Active Living Conference is “Expanding Living Applications Beyond Chronic Diseases to Synergistic Epidemics”, which is exploring the “role of active living in addressing multiple, intersecting crises such as COVID 19, mental health, climate change and structural racism”.

More information, including the more complete schedule of the vast number of topics being presented at the Active Living Conference can be found on the GP RED website. The link specific to the Active Living Conference is as follows: <https://www.gpred.org/activelivingconference/>

Submitted by: Donna J. Kuethe, Executive Director GP RED – donnak@gpred.org (contact for more information).

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Arene Berry, Milford Recreation—Breakfast with Santa

Breakfast with Santa is one of my favorite events because it is one I started with the Department. I love the response from the community with the number of attendees that come to the event along with the overabundance of volunteers that are willing to help.



Tennis Growing in New Hampshire Public Parks

JAMES MAIMONIS, MANAGER, MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS | January 17, 2023

There is no denying it, tennis is on a meteoric rise in our country. Since the start of 2020, the sport has seen an increase of nearly 6 million Americans, with last year alone boasting 23.6 million people playing the sport, according to the Tennis Industry Association.

The U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) of New England, one of 17 regional sections of the USTA, the national governing body of tennis, is riding that wave of momentum at a local level. The organization, whose mission is to promote and develop the growth of tennis, has, and continues to implement grassroots programming on public courts and recreation centers, where more than 60 percent of tennis in New England is played.

Tennis in the Parks is USTA New England's introductory tennis program for youth and adults run in partnership with the city or town's recreation department. Since 2018, Tennis in the Parks has given thousands of new players the chance to try tennis for the first time or get back into the game, all at an affordable cost.

New Hampshire continues to be a leader in the USTA New England region, featuring 11 recreation department partnerships in 2022 and 16 since 2018.

"So many New Hampshire recreation departments have had the need for and seen the value of this program in their communities and have truly embraced it. We've been fortunate to have made partnerships with so many great communities and been able to attract terrific coaches of all backgrounds to lead our new and beginner players," said Eric Driscoll, USTA New England Tennis in the Parks Manager.

The City of Manchester ran one of New England’s first Tennis in the Parks pilots and has seen programs in the city every season since (excluding spring and summer 2020 due to pandemic protocols). More than 200 area players have been introduced or re-introduced to tennis through Tennis in the Parks.

“Eric approached us in 2018 at a conference, and we didn’t have a grassroots tennis program at the time, so we jumped all over it,” said Manchester Recreation Supervisor Erik Bukowski. “How the program is built is very attractive for new players and families. It’s tailored to the grassroots player. Plus, getting to play in a familiar place with people of the same ability level has been why the program has had so much success.”

Each session typically runs for six weeks and ranges around \$65-\$85 per session. All players are given a new racquet to keep as part of their registration, one of the program’s biggest selling points, according to Bukowski.

“Getting that racquet is huge, as it’s one of the main barriers to entry for players. Rather than figuring out what size and style they need, they just show up and the coach gives them the racquet that fits best,” he said.

Tennis in the Parks features red, orange and green ball sessions based on age and ability, adult lessons, and in some cases, parent/child classes.

The program has a curriculum focused on physical activity, skill building and applying learned skills into match play.

“Everyone I’ve coached seemed to have a very positive experience. Both the kids and adults want to be there and are eager to learn,” said Carla Breton, who coached the Exeter program for the past two years. “The curriculum is designed so you are always doing something and aren’t just standing in a line. This keeps players engaged and taps into their desire to continue learning.”

Tennis in the Parks has three seasons of play, spring, summer and fall, and is always seeking new coaches, players and recreation partners.

Coaches do not need prior experience, however they must be 18+ and Safe Play certified.

If you’re interested in coaching or playing or starting a program in your area, please visit the [Tennis in the Parks homepage](#).



Treating Seasonal Affective Disorder

Source: National Institute of Health

Is the long, cold winter getting you down? For people with seasonal affective disorder (SAD), the change in seasons brings on a form of depression. Most often, it begins in late fall or early winter each year and goes away in the spring and summer. Common signs of SAD include low energy, overeating, and sleeping too much.

If you have SAD, there are several things you can do. Try to be active and exercise. Spend time with other people and confide in a trusted friend or relative. Medications like antidepressants and psychotherapy can also help. Some people may find relief through complementary health approaches, like light therapy. Using an ultrabright light box each day may help replace the natural sunlight you're missing during the winter. Light boxes give off light that's about 20 times brighter than ordinary lighting.

Some studies support a form of talk therapy adapted for SAD. This type of cognitive behavioral therapy focuses on replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. You may also be asked to identify activities you enjoy.

A few small studies suggest that supplements like St. John's wort and melatonin may help with SAD. But experts caution that St. John's wort can interact with many medications. And melatonin may improve sleep for some people with SAD, but it's not known if long-term use is safe.

If you're experiencing SAD, talk with your doctor to come up with a plan to feel better.



NHRPA Sponsor Form

NHRPA values the relationship we have with our commercial members. We are proud to offer the following three unique advertisement / sponsorship opportunities for 2023: NHRPA VIP, Rec Connect Newsletter Ad and monthly email sponsor.

[CLICK HERE](#)



An advertisement for Safety Fiber. The top part has the text 'Safety Fiber' and 'All-natural Engineered Wood Fiber' in white on a blue background. Below this is a photograph of a playground with a slide and a climbing structure. In the bottom left corner is the Durgin and Crowell logo, which features two stylized figures holding hands above a tree. To the right of the logo is a white box containing contact information: 'Durgin and Crowell Lumber', '603-763-2860', 'www.durginandcrowell.com', 'jonbaker@durginandcrowell.com', 'Certified Playground chips', and 'ASTM F1292, ASTM F2075 & ASTM F1951-14 Delivered anywhere in New England'.

NHRPA Career Center

Looking for a new job?
Visit the NHRPA Career Center and your new job could be just a click away!!!

[CLICK HERE](#)

2023 Northern New England Recreation & Park Conference Wrap-up

First and foremost, the conference committee would like to thank our Commercial Partners. They are integral to what we do and this Conference could not take place without their support.

A special shout out to our Gold Partners:

- Ben Shaffer Recreation
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- Field Turf
- Landscape Structures
- M.E. O'Brien & Sons
- MyRec.com
- Musco Lighting
- Pioneer Athletics



2023 Conference Evaluation

Did you enjoy the conference sessions, amenities and social networking? Do you have suggestions for what we can do better? Please complete the survey and provide feedback.

[CLICK HERE](#) to complete the evaluation

Looking for CEU Form: Please complete our Conference Evaluation. You will find the CEU form at the end.

Interested in being a speaker at the 2024 Conference?

We are always looking for speakers! It is a great way to highlight your successes and share your experiences with others in the field.

[CLICK HERE](#) to complete the 2024 Speaker Form

See you next January!



5 Keys to Healthy & Successful Work-Life Balance

Learn the keys to preventing burnout and keeping your passion for parks and recreation.

[Read more...](#)



Incorporating Equity into Cost Recovery

Prince William County (Virginia) Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has subscribed to an assertive cost-recovery model in which virtually all programming and indoor facility use require a fee.

[Read more...](#)



Access Affordable Activities with Parks & Recreation

Nearly three in five people are very or extremely interested in these opportunities.

[Read more...](#)



Member Benefits: American with Disabilities Act Hot Topics

Learn about the ADA compliance guidelines for playgrounds and trails.

[Read more...](#)

THANKS FOR READING

I hope you enjoyed the NHRPA Rec Connect Newsletter. If you would like to submit an article, picture, advertisement or story for the spring/summer newsletter please submit information by Friday, April 7, 2023 to executivedirector@nhrpa.com

Contact NHRPA:

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