

# HALL OF FAME



**Homer Abbott**

## **Homer Abbott** **GRAND FORKS PARK DISTRICT** **2008**

Homer Abbott of Grand Forks was the 13th individual elected to the NDRPA Hall of Fame. Abbott was considered one of the pioneers of NDRPA, when meetings were held with a handful of other park superintendents during the North Dakota League of Cities annual conference and typically consisted of touring the host city's park facilities.

Serving in the U.S. Army Air Force from 1942-1946, Abbott was a staff sergeant responsible for physical education and recreation. He also worked in recreation in Illinois and Ohio.

Abbott, hired in 1949, was the first recreation director in Grand Forks and then served as park superintendent for 22 years from 1956-1978. In addition to serving as NDRPA president, he was a member of the National Advisory Council of Parks and Recreation.

Abbott was a forerunner in developing innovative recreation partnerships, including a Kennel Club and Gun Club. He started a "Just for Fun" program for girls and boys and developed playgrounds for numerous neighborhoods. He also started arts, dog training, adaptive recreation, archery, and recreational swimming programs.

In 1978, the Grand Forks Park District named a sports complex, which included basketball, handball, volleyball, and tennis components, after Abbott.

Abbott is remembered for his dedication to the recreation profession and the toasty warming houses, popular Easter egg hunts, flower-filled greenhouses, and playgrounds developed during his career.

He was also an active community member involved in several organizations, including the Elks and American Legion Exchange Club. He received the Greater Grand Forks Sertoma Club's 1976 Service to Mankind Award.

He passed away in 1979.

*All NDRPA Hall of Fame members are recognized with plaques at the North Dakota Sports Hall of Fame in the Jamestown Civic Center.*

**Advancing parks and recreation for an enhanced quality of life in North Dakota.**

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