

FOCUS

The Official Publication of the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association

Fall 2016



Grondahl Inducted into NDRPA Hall of Fame, Page 6
Youth Sports in Our Community, Page 22

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

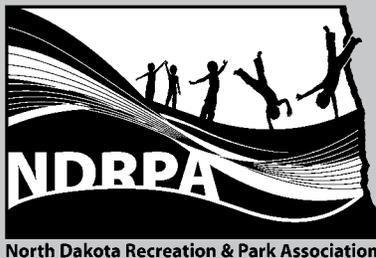
With the fall and winter season approaching, most of us are finished with summer programs and closing down summer facilities as we get ready for the fall and winter. As most of you who have known me for any time know, winter is my favorite time of the year. Not because I like snow, but it is the beginning of hockey season. As the MAYSA arena manager with the Minot Park District, I am already into busy days and weekends. I hope many of you get some time to catch your breath between seasons and enjoy some recreation and leisure time with your families and friends.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for allowing me to serve as NDRPA President for a second time. I also want to thank our Past President Craig Bjur with the Fargo Park District for his leadership and guidance this past year as president of our association. We had an excellent 2016 NDRPA State Conference in Williston. The Williston Parks & Recreation District (WPRD) did an outstanding job hosting this event, and the WPRD staff went the extra mile. I also want to thank our Executive Director Dana Schaar Jahner for her work before and during the conference.

We have a great NDRPA Member Meeting planned for Nov. 9-10 in Bismarck, which is geared toward the 2017

Legislative Session. We will have NDRPA committee meetings, along with educational sessions centered on legislative issues. Thursday morning we will have breakfast and hold a tax discussion. Schedule and registration information can be found by going to www.ndrpa.com. I encourage you to bring as many staff from your park districts as you can for this two-day event, and we also would love to invite park board commissioners from large and small community park boards around the state. I look forward to seeing many of you in Bismarck.

Bob Gillen, NDRPA President



Mission

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

Strategic Goals

1. Member Services: Provide training, information and networking for parks and recreation stakeholders.
2. Policy Advocacy: Represent parks and recreation interests on public policy issues.
3. Public Outreach: Promote the benefits of parks and recreation and the importance of conservation, health and wellness, and access.



Nov. 9-10	Member Meeting, Bismarck
Jan. 15	FOCUS Deadline
March 7	Parks Day at the Capitol, Bismarck
March 14-16	CPSI Course, Bismarck
April 23-24	Midwest Conference, Kansas

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FOCUS is the official magazine of the North Dakota Recreation & Park Association (NDRPA). It is distributed quarterly via mail to more than 600 members and posted on the NDRPA website. Submission of articles and photographs are encouraged in digital format to clearfour@btinet.net. Photographs should be high-resolution (300 dpi or greater). Advertising information is available online at www.ndrpa.com.

Next FOCUS deadline: January 15, 2017

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New Leadership Elected to Board of Directors

George Hellyer from Grand Forks is the new president elect and three new members joined the NDRPA Board of Directors at the Sept. 15 annual meeting in Williston. Kevin Klipfel of Bismarck was elected secretary/treasurer, and two new board positions were created: external affairs chair held by Ashley Krasicki of Williston and internal affairs chair manned by Amber Mathieson of Dickinson. Board contact information can be found at www.ndrpa.com.

Events Scheduled for Coming Year

A member meeting focused on legislative issues will be held in Bismarck Nov. 9-10.

NDRPA will take a more active role in Parks Day at the Capitol March 7 in Bismarck.

NDRPA will host its 15th annual Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) Course on March 14-16 in Bismarck. Take advantage of this first-class training to ensure playgrounds are safe for children.

The sixth annual ND Trails Conference, co-hosted by NDRPA and the ND Parks and Recreation Department, will be held in Bottineau in August and feature numerous field sessions.

NDRPA's signature event – the State Conference – will be held Sept. 12-14 in Mandan.

More details on these events will be posted on the NDRPA website at www.ndrpa.com and distributed via the monthly NDRPA eUpdate.

NDRPA Adopts New Strategic Plan

The membership adopted a new strategic plan for the association focused on three strategic goals: member services, policy advocacy and public outreach. Check out the complete plan at www.ndrpa.com.

Make Sure NDRPA News Arrives in Your Mailbox

Do you receive the NDRPA eUpdate in your inbox each month? Do you want to stay connected with the latest legislative news to impact park districts when the session starts in January? Then make sure you provide NDRPA with your email address by contacting clearfour@btinet.net.

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Grondahl Inducted into NDRPA Hall of Fame

Larry Grondahl was inducted into the NDRPA Hall of Fame at the NDRPA State Conference Awards Banquet on Sept. 14 in Williston. This is the highest honor given by NDRPA.

Grondahl's career and commitment to parks and recreation has spanned a period of more than 40 years. He invested early in the profession and received a bachelor's degree in recreation and leisure studies from the University of North Dakota. While in college, Grondahl returned during the holidays and summer to work for Williston Parks and Recreation as a programs supervisor and coach. He began his full-time career as a recreation program manager in Williston and then served as recreation superintendent in Bismarck. He eventually returned to Williston to embark on a career of service and sales of park and playground equipment.

Grondahl has served community and statewide organizations with active participation and leadership. He has been a member of NDRPA since 1980, serving as both president and membership chair. Other organizations in which Grondahl has been involved include the Williston Baseball Committee, Williston State



College Foundation Board and Booster Club, ND Babe Ruth Baseball, ND Basketball Officials Association and the Williston CVB.

Beyond committee and association involvement, Grondahl was elected five times to the Williston Park Board and served 20 years as an elected park board commissioner, including the position of president. During his time on the park board, he was instrumental in bringing the dream of the Williston Area Recreation Center to reality. Grondahl has also led numerous fundraising drives to help with improvements to ball parks, and, in 2002, Grondahl Field was named for him and his late wife Char after he spearheaded its development.

Among other awards Grondahl has earned are the Babe Ruth World Series Committee ND Sports Hall of Fame, ND Babe Ruth Hall of Fame, Western Star Award-Williston, ND Officials Association Active Official of the Year, and Babe Ruth League's Lefty Gomez Volunteer of the Year.

Grondahl has changed the lives of youth and adults in Williston and throughout North Dakota by improving their quality of life through active engagement in parks and recreation.

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NDRPA Awards Presented

NDRPA presented four awards during the 2016 Awards Banquet at the NDRPA State Conference in Williston Sept. 14. Congratulations to all the award winners!

Golden Egg Award

This award, established in honor of former Fargo Park District Superintendent Bob "Goose" Johnson, acknowledges outstanding and innovative park projects throughout the state.

**ICON Sports Center,
Grand Forks Park District**
Bill Palmiscno



Innovative Programming Award

This award recognizes and honors an NDRPA member agency or organization that demonstrates leadership with advanced groundbreaking ideas in programming.



**Park Passport, Bismarck Parks and
Recreation District**
Paula Redmann



Universal Playground, Mandan Parks and Recreation
Mandan Parks and Recreation Staff

Scholarship Recognition

NDRPA annually recognizes outstanding university students enrolled in the fields of parks, recreation, leisure, natural resources and tourism through the Dr. Sandra Modisett Memorial Scholarship. Jennifer Croy, who is a senior in the Recreation and Tourism Studies Program at the University of North Dakota, was awarded the \$1,000 scholarship.



**Super Hero Camp, Williston Parks and
Recreation District**
Ashley Krasicki

Grants Available from Land and Water Conservation Fund

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) received approximately \$850,801 of federal grant monies that will be available for outdoor recreation projects through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

LWCF is a 50/50 matching grant program administered at the state level by NDPRD and funded at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS). LWCF provides grants for outdoor recreation projects such as ball fields, pools, campgrounds, playgrounds and land acquisitions for park development. Projects will be required to start in 2017.

The application is online at www.parkrec.nd.gov under the grants tab. The application cycle closes Dec. 7 at 1 p.m. Central Time.

2016 LWCF Grants Awarded

NDPRD award 2016 LWCF grant funds to the following agencies:

- Barnes County Park Board-Clausen Springs Park Improvements
- Bismarck Parks and Recreation District-Neighborhood Park Medora Avenue
- Crosby Park District-Sand Volleyball Court
- Devils Lake Park Board-Lakewood Beach Project
- Hillsboro Park District-Olsen Softball Complex Upgrades
- NDPRD-Fort Stevenson State Park Playground Equipment
- NDPRD-State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP)
- New Salem Park District-North Park Renovation



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Kayak Launch Allows Greater Access to Red River Corridor

The Fargo Park District and River Keepers teamed up to unveil a new adaptive launch in Lindenwood Park in Fargo Sept. 1. The launch is the first of its kind in the area and is fully Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, allowing for a wide variety of users to enjoy the benefits of non-motorized water sports on the Red River.

The launch and dock, which can be easily removed in the fall and re-installed in the spring to protect it from damage by ice or flooding, cost \$24,500, with \$8,500 spent on a concrete accessway. It is designed for launching non-motorized watercraft on a steady footing. Users are spared the mess and inconvenience of traversing through clay-like mud along the riverbank. It is located near a small parking area and was installed on a straightaway on the north side of an oxbow in the river.

This new amenity is a way to ensure everyone has access to spending a quiet afternoon enjoying the outdoors and scenery of the Red River. The Fargo Park District is considering adding kayak rentals in 2017.



Mandan's Kiwanis Park Features New Playground

Kiwanis Park has a new play structure. The park is located at 201 3rd Street SE in Mandan. This playground is the only structure in Mandan designed specifically for the 2-5 age range. This playground includes three slides, swings, climbers, merry-go-round, teeter totter and a generation swing. The generation swing allows children and their guardian to swing face-to-face.

New Look at El Zagal Public Golf Course

The 2016 golf season is drawing to a close at El Zagal Public Golf Course, located near the Red River in Fargo. This season at El Zagal marked the reopening of the course after a massive reconstruction project to accommodate a city levee project that closed the course for 22 months. This project gave the opportunity to completely renovate El Zagal.

"It's been great to see people back out playing on El Zagal. It's been a long time coming and the grounds crew did a great job getting the course ready for this day," said El Zagal PGA Pro Greg McCullough about the reopening June 15.

Former Fargo Park District Executive Director Roger Gress included, "You know, this diversion project worked out well for us. It's given us the opportunity to revitalize much of our grounds and the way that El Zagal turned out is fantastic."

Originally built in 1940, and now a Gill Design Inc. creation, this par 27 course has provided some of the most fun links in the area and tailors to all skill levels. While still maintaining its par 3 status, the course has seen improvements to its tee boxes, fairways and greens. It is also home to a new pro shop.

In addition to traditional golf, El Zagal is excited to be the only golf course in the area to offer FootGolf. FootGolf combines the game of golf and soccer into one dynamic sport. Players kick a soccer ball into an oversized cup in the least amount of kicks as possible, similar to the way traditional golf is played.

"It has been a fun learning experience with the FootGolf addition. Since it's exclusively at El Zagal, it has been very popular," said McCullough. "We see groups coming to the course especially for this game, but it's also been a fun way to involve your non-traditional golfers in the game."



Construction Underway on Bismarck's Capital Ice Complex

The ground has been broken and the construction has begun in Bismarck for the Capital Ice Complex, featuring the existing Schaumberg Arena and a brand new sheet of ice, Wachter Arena. The complex and new arena names were announced in September at a ground-breaking ceremony. This expansion is possible due to the support of a generous business community and many, many individuals and families.

The "Building on Tradition" capital campaign worked closely with Bismarck Parks and Recreation District and raised just over \$3.7 million to help fund the expansion. The Bismarck Hockey Boosters and the Bismarck Figure Skating Club made substantial donations to the project, as well as the Chad and Stacy Wachter family. The project includes the new Wachter Arena, upgrades to the existing Schaumberg Arena, a new parking lot and improvements to Wachter Park, including a new playground and picnic shelter. Construction should be complete in the fall of 2017.

Turning over the first dirt for the Capital Ice Complex expansion and new Wachter Arena are Bismarck Board of Park Commissioners Jason Starck, Julie Jeske, President Wayne Munson and naming sponsors Chad and Stacy Wachter.



Newest Bismarck Park Open and Ready for Play

Normandy Park, located at 3924 Normandy Street in northwest Bismarck, features a construction-themed playground, shelter, 1/3 mile loop trail and open space. Bismarck Parks and Recreation District owned the land and received an Outdoor Recreation

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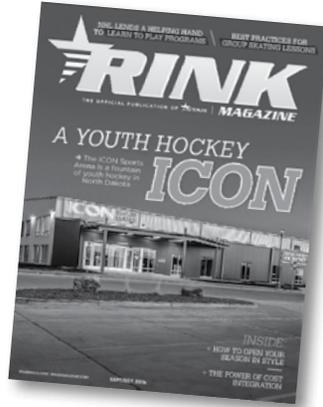
PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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Facilities grant through the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department to assist with the completion of this neighborhood park. Other neighborhood parks that opened this year include Sunrise Park, Southland Park, Heritage Park and South Meadows Park.

ICON Sports Center Receives National Recognition

ICON Sports Center received national recognition as it was featured on the cover of the September/October issue of *Rink Magazine*. The publication, the insider's world of skating rinks and the rink industry, describes ICON Sports Center as a fountain of youth hockey in North Dakota.



Within the article, Wes Colborn, the ICON Sports Center arena manager, expresses gratitude for the iconic support behind the project. "The thing we're most proud of is that the community made this happen," says Colborn.

Zombie Run Held in Mandan

The Mandan Zombie Run, a local event to benefit recreation groups in Mandan, was held Oct. 29 with profits donated to Dakota Star Gymnastics. The "chased or to be chased" event featured a two-mile run around Mandan Park District's Disc Golf Course with two types of runners: humans and zombies. Humans wore flag-football flags representing lives with the goal of reaching the extraction zone with at least one flag. Zombies were released approximately one minute after the humans started the race. Zombies collected as many lives (flags) as possible with the goal of infecting all of the humans running to the extraction zone. All runners received an event t-shirt, race bib and medal for participating in the Mandan Zombie Run.

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PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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Jamestown Activity Center under Construction

The Two Rivers Activity Center, a project of Jamestown Parks and Recreation, is currently under construction in Jamestown. The building is on schedule for substantial completion in August 2017 and occupancy in September 2017.



Kickball Grows in Mandan

This is Mandan Park District's seventh year offering the Adult Kickball League, which has generated a lot of interest through the years. Growing each year, the league now has more than 350 participants with 24 teams playing on Tuesday or Wednesday nights. Games kicked off in mid-August and ended with a tournament in late October. Participants re-live their childhood glory days at Mandan's Adult Kickball League.



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New Wellness Center Opens in Valley City

Valley City's Gaukler Family Wellness Center (GFWC) made its official opening on Oct. 1. While there are a few things yet to finish up before its grand opening in November, the facility is open and thriving.

Valley City Parks and Recreation offices have moved into the brand new facility and all staff members are loving it right along with the community.

The 65,000-square-foot facility has something for everyone: a zero depth pool with four lap lanes and a hot tub; child watch for ages 8 weeks to 8 years; indoor playground; two group fitness rooms; 150 meter indoor walking track; birthday party room with access to the pool and playground; and men's, women's and family locker rooms.

The GFWC offers a large variety of both adult and youth fitness classes. The facility rents out space to Valley City State University and Mercy Hospital as well. Funding for the facility has been through generous private donations, along with a city tax increase.



Continued on page 16

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PARK DISTRICT NEWS

Continued from page 15

2nd Annual Bakken X-Trek Obstacle Mud Run Held in Williston

"It just gets dirtier" was the slogan for this year's Bakken X-trek Obstacle Mud Run put on by the Williston Parks and Recreation District. On Sept. 10, participants had to run, crawl, swim and climb over 30 natural and manmade obstacles.

With approximately 200 X-Trekkers and 40 volunteers, this event was geared to the competitive runner, families and anyone in-between. Toby Osborn was one enthusiastic runner who signed up her entire family, along with her brother's family. "We had a blast!" she says. "I was impressed with the obstacles; I think crawling through the mud was my favorite...probably because the look on my kids' faces was priceless! Big smiles. Whether you're in it to be competitive or simply

because it's something to do with your friends and family, I can see this event growing in our community and we'll be back next year!"



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Cooperative Purchasing – Get What You Need

By Christine Schafer, State Procurement Office, ND Office of Management and Budget

Did you know your parks and recreation district can use state contracts to purchase goods and services? Cooperative purchasing is a free service and an effective tool you can use to leverage time and cost efficiencies.

Partnering with the ND Office of Management and Budget (OMB) State Procurement Office can reduce administrative time and save money while leveraging the experience and expertise of those with specialized procurement knowledge. You can be confident knowing that your purchases have met the standards of ethical and accountable public procurement. With budgets being stretched to the limit, it is essential to use innovative ways to utilize taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

There are contracts available for various goods and services. Your office personnel may be interested in

the small package delivery services offered by UPS and Fed Ex or the contract for sit/stand ergonomic desks and accessories, which provides a variety of solutions including desktop-mounted or free-standing desks. Your maintenance team would find interest in the multiple vehicle contracts available, including pickups, cargo vans and utility vehicles, in addition to vehicle lifts and garage equipment, vehicle parts and lift gates. There are also service contracts for shredding, recycling and waste disposal, including hazardous materials.

You can find more information about all state contracts on the OMB website at www.nd.gov/omb/agency/procurement/state-contracts. If you have any questions, please contact the State Procurement Office at 701-328-2740 or infospo@nd.gov.

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- Janitorial Products & Trash Bags
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You can find more information about State Contracts at www.nd.gov/omb/agency/procurement/state-contracts.

If you have any questions, please contact the State Procurement Office at 701-328-2740 or infospo@nd.gov.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Sept. 6 marked the first official day for **Joel Vettel** as the new executive director of the Fargo Park District (FPD). Joel previously served as FPD commissioner and is a 20-year veteran of the Fargo Police Department.



Bekey Hicks has been hired as the recreation receptionist/office assistant for the Recreation Department with FPD. Her start date was Sept. 15. Bekey is married and has two adult daughters with one grandchild arriving around Christmas. She likes to be outdoors and watching sports (especially the

Bison and the Vikings). She also enjoys an evening out with the "girls" when she can.



Ali Keller is the new facility manager at Valley City's Gaukler Family Wellness Center, operated by Valley City Parks and Recreation. She has years of fitness facility management and ownership, as well as a degree from North Dakota State University. Ali is currently the president of USA Weightlifting for the state of North Dakota and is also a certified CrossFit trainer, powerlifting and Olympic lifting coach, cycling coach and senior fitness trainer. Ali and her husband reside in Valley City with their two young sons.

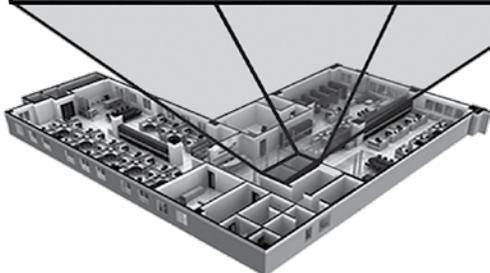
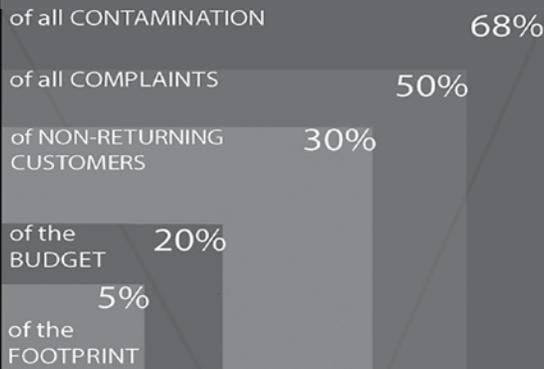
Retirement Open House for Gress

Retiring Fargo Park District Executive Director Roger Gress will stay on until the end of 2016 to provide institutional memory and manage some ongoing projects. A retirement open house will be held from 3-6 p.m. Dec. 7 at the Depot located at 701 Main Avenue. All are welcome to attend this public event.

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COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Delores Gallbreath has been a member of the Hettinger Park Board since 1994 and currently serves as the board president. The previous president asked Delores to get involved with the park board more than 20 years ago, and she's been there ever since. "It was a chance to give back to the community and something I've continued to show interest in throughout the years," she remarks on her 22 years with the park board.

One of the main goals Gallbreath works toward as park board president is keeping the town's pool open. She says it not only provides recreation for many children, but swimming lessons for those learning how to swim. The park board is also always looking to provide a variety of recreational activities to the citizens of Hettinger. Gallbreath says funding is one of the challenges the board faces when trying to provide new and innovative ideas for their community.

"NDRPA is a great resource as they keep us informed and provide us with new ideas and resources to better serve our community," says Gallbreath. "As of right now, Hettinger doesn't have any big projects in the works, but we've always got projects in mind."

Delores gives credit to the community's children as being her inspiration for her hard work on the park board. "It's rewarding to see the children being able to participate in a variety of recreational activities," she says.



Delores Gallbreath



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Member Achievements Recognized

Fugazzi Receives Distinguished Service Trees Award

Mike Fugazzi was recognized as the 2016 Distinguished Service Trees Award winner at the Trees Bowl and Award Ceremony held in Fargo Sept. 10. Nominations were received from across the state, and the award winners were recognized by the ND Forest Service and NDSU.

Mike Fugazzi started working for the Grand Forks Park District in 1979 and has been forestry manager since 1998. He is responsible for the park district's forestry crew that works through all seasons to provide the city of Grand Forks with more than 40,000 well-maintained trees in its parks, golf courses and on its city berms. The crew also plants an average of 1,000 new trees each spring. Through Fugazzi's guidance, each park district forestry professional must maintain certification from the International Society of Arboriculture and must also carry certification in chemicals used for pest and disease control. These qualifications greatly contribute to the arborist's knowledge of tree care, diseases in trees and proper cuts when pruning.

During the awards ceremony, NDSU President Dean Bresciani and State Forester Larry Kotchman presented each winner with a special Trees Awards Plaque and



limited edition Centennial Trees print. The award winners were also involved in a ceremonial tree planting and recognized on the field during the NDSU half-time activities at the winning Trees Bowl football game in the Fargodome.

In addition, the city of Grand Forks won the Community of the Year Trees Award. Greater Grand Forks is one of two communities in North Dakota and one of only 16 communities in the nation that have maintained their Tree City USA certification over the past 40 years.

Schwinden and Johnson Receive Honors from Dakota Chapter PGA

The Dakota Chapter PGA held its annual Dakota Chapter Awards and Fall Meeting in October in Fargo. Two key staff at Fargo's Osgood Golf Course, operated by the Fargo Park District, were recognized for their contributions to the game of golf in the tri-state area. Osgood Head Pro Lisa Schwinden (pictured left) was named Golf Professional of the Year for her leadership, promotion of the game of golf, responsibility at a facility, image and longevity as a golf professional.

Current Osgood Assistant Pro Katie Johnson (pictured right) was named Assistant Golf Professional of the Year for her leadership, promotion of the game of golf, responsibility at a facility and image as an assistant professional.

Dakota Chapter PGA awards six Dakota Chapter Awards annually. Recipients are nominated by their peers for the honor and each nominee is reviewed by a panel of industry professionals. Golf Professional of the Year is considered one of the highest honors the association can bestow.



Klipfel Earns CPRE Certification

Congratulations to Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) Facilities and Programs Director Kevin Klipfel for recently receiving his Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE) certification.



The CPRE is a fairly new certification program through the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This master-level certification establishes a national standard for managerial, administrative and executive parks and recreation professionals. This credential focuses on the practical knowledge and current real-world skills necessary in today's changing park and recreation environment.

Klipfel is the second CPRE in North Dakota, joining BPRD Executive Director Randy Bina with this honor. Klipfel and Bina are among the first 185 professionals nationwide to achieve this level of certification.

Summers Named USTA Janet Louer JTT National Organizer of the Year

Oliver Summers of Courts Plus Community Fitness, Fargo Park District, was honored as the 2016 United States Tennis Association (USTA) Janet Louer Junior Team Tennis National Organizer of the Year at the USTA Semiannual Meeting Sept. 4 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City.

Summers is the first person from USTA Northern to ever win the award, which is given to an individual who positively influences children's lives and substantially impacts their community.



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Youth Sports in Our Community – After Season Play, Proceed with Caution

By Chanell Walby, Bowman Parks and Recreation

So the youth sports season has ended and the kids are full of joy about the sport. What now? The best plan of action is to let the kids move on to the next sport, play on their own, go to a camp to increase skills and look forward to playing next year. By having a shorter season (6-8 weeks), the participants will not get burned out and are less likely to be injured. The National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) has researched youth sport programs since 1981 and has found 70 percent of youth quit sports by the age of 13 because they are no longer having fun. We do not like that statistic because we know the value of playing sports and how good it is for youth. We want to keep kids playing to help build programs, keep them physically fit and most of all because they love to play.

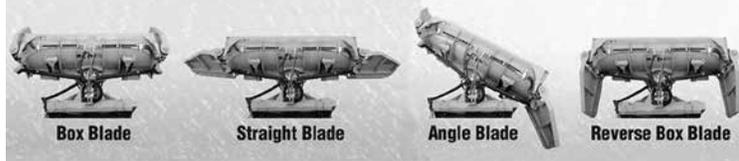
The purpose of Bowman Parks and Recreation (BPR) youth sports program is to help develop skills, keep kids engaged and have fun. BPR wants children to continue playing in the years ahead and, by following a program that places the needs of the child (skills equal playing time and fun) ahead of personal philosophies, BPR will provide the next level with coachable athletes.

So how does the BPR youth sports program fit in with after season play? **Proceed with Caution.** Parents get so excited about their children's sports adventures. They see so much potential, and some parents want to start up a traveling team and play in tournaments after the rec program season has ended. Some want to pick and choose the players for their team. Some want to pick only the friends or the better skilled players at that time to be on the team. What message does that send the other elementary-age kids that did not get asked to play? There are some unintentional consequences to this that may affect children's future in the sport. In a smaller community, every player is important and so many players develop at different ages. Basically, don't count anyone out. Sports are not just natural ability or size-related; a child that is tall in elementary may be the shortest player in high school and vice versa. Many kids may work at that sport on their own or go to camps and improve and even surpass the others.

Proceed with Courtesy. All rec program kids in that grade should be asked to play in post-season play, and the child/parent can then decide whether they want to play or not. If more than 10 kids want to play, then another coach and team can be formed. No parent should determine the future of another kid. When a parent chooses to start a traveling team with only a portion of the kids that were in the rec program, they are intentionally choosing to enhance their child's skills, and they are therefore cutting others out. Some will say that other parents need to step up and coach their kids, not knowing that not all parents have the skills, ability or time to coach their kids. That is why there are rec programs.

Proceed with Course of Action. Realize the process (playing, improvement, fun) and not the product (final score or win/loss) as the goal. BPR believes maximum participation is necessary to help develop kids and keep kids playing. We want to keep the season focused on skill building and fun during a 6-8 week season, and the season should come to an end at the height of enjoyment so the kids cannot wait to play next year. Setting individual and team goals are a way of measuring improvement. This is what builds programs and community.

Lastly, Shoot for Positive Consequences. The purpose of this article is to help parents see the very realistic consequences and keep every child in mind when deciding to start a traveling team. The bigger picture is so vital and, with so much importance placed on sports in our community, we want adults to be a positive influence on our youth.



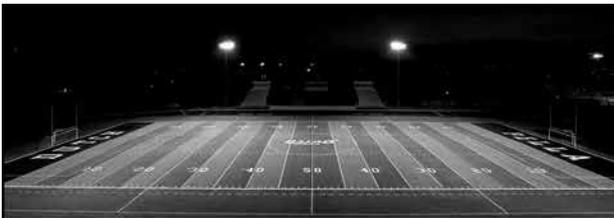
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