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The Official Publication of the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association Spring 2018





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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello NDRPA Members! As I review the article I wrote in January for *FOCUS*, it was during a blizzard warning. As I began to write this article in April, it was just after I returned from a weekend in Minneapolis that featured a major blizzard. I will be honest; I am a little concerned about writing the *FOCUS* article in July for the summer issue!

We will be transitioning soon to the busy summer season, and there is a new important date to keep in mind. During the 2017 Legislative Session, there was a change to the budget deadline requirements. The preliminary budget is due to the county auditor by Aug. 10 this year. Please note this is one month earlier than in prior years. In addition, the final budget and public hearing date is to be set between Sept. 7 and Oct. 7. Please reference the article in this issue of *FOCUS* and North Dakota Century Code 40-40-06 for additional details relating to the budget requirements.

A couple of conferences on the horizon are the ND Trails Conference in Fargo Aug. 7-8 and the annual NDRPA State Conference in Dickinson Sept. 11-13. I have been to the NDRPA State Conference several times, and it always has great educational sessions

and a chance to network with colleagues. One of my personal favorites is the facilities tour. I look forward to what James Kramer and the rest of his wonderful staff have in store for us in Dickinson this year. Please be on the lookout for registration details for the ND Trails Conference and the NDRPA State Conference.

The NDRPA awards application deadline is July 16. This is a great opportunity to recognize those individuals that go above and beyond the call of duty to help make your park district an outstanding asset to your community. In addition, there are facilities and programming awards to recognize new achievements in your communities. Please consider nominating your outstanding individuals, facilities or programs from your community. You can see the various awards and criteria at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).

As we gear up for our busy summer season, please remember to stay safe and enjoy the summer!



George Hellyer, NDRPA President



North Dakota Recreation & Park Association

## 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.



<b>July 15</b>	<i>FOCUS</i> Deadline
<b>July 16</b>	Awards Nomination Deadline
<b>Aug. 7-8</b>	ND Trails Conference, Fargo
<b>Sept. 11-13</b>	NDRPA State Conference, Dickinson
<b>Sept. 25-27</b>	NRPA Annual Conference, Indianapolis

George Hellyer, CPA  
NDRPA President

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**Next FOCUS deadline:** July 15, 2018

Cover photo: Spring Lake Park, Williston Parks and Recreation District

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# Park District Preliminary Budgets Due to County by Aug. 10

During the 2017 Legislative Assembly, state legislators changed the budget adoption timeline for political subdivisions, including park districts, via Senate Bill 2288. Starting this year, all taxing entities must submit their preliminary budget and budget hearing date to the county by Aug. 10.

## Preliminary Budget

No later than Aug. 10 of each year, park districts must submit their preliminary budget statement to the county auditor. A park district must also set a public budget hearing date no earlier than Sept. 7 and no later than Oct. 7 to adopt the final budget and approve the annual tax levy. Notice of the public budget hearing date must also be provided to the county auditor by Aug. 10.

If no budget information is provided by a park district to the county by the deadline, the county auditor will use last year's information to prepare the estimate.

## Public Notice

For park districts levying less than \$100,000, public notice of the budget hearing details and a statement of the total proposed expenditures for each fund in the preliminary budget must be published at least once, not less than six days prior to the budget hearing, in the official city newspaper.

For park districts levying more than \$100,000, notice

of the budget hearing date, time and location will be mailed by the county treasurer to all taxpayers with an estimated tax of \$100 or more per parcel by Aug. 31. Direct costs of this mailing may be assessed by the county to each taxing entity in a manner proportionate to the notices mailed. SB 2288 also eliminated the zero mill increase notice to taxpayers required by political subdivisions levying more than \$100,000 per year.

## Final Budget

Park districts must submit their final budgets and tax levies to the county auditor by Oct. 10. If no levy certification is received by Oct. 10, a park district will not be allowed to levy any taxes to operate the next year.

Details about municipal budget law, which applies to park districts, are available in North Dakota Century Code 40-40.

### Park District Budget Timeline

<b>Aug. 10</b>	Submit preliminary budget and hearing information to county
<b>Sept. 7-Oct. 7</b>	Hold public budget hearing to approve budget and tax levy
<b>Oct. 10</b>	Submit final budget and tax levy to county



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## NDRPA Seeks Nominees for Hall of Fame

NDRPA will honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the parks and recreation field in North Dakota, based on a reputable performance attested to a personal record of accomplishment. The Hall of Fame Council, under the jurisdiction of NDRPA, has a voting procedure to select worthy individuals.

Candidates are eligible if they satisfy at least two of the following three criteria:

1. Fifty years old.
2. Twenty years of parks and recreation service in North Dakota.
3. Retirement.

The application form includes the following:

- Personal information on the candidate.
- NDRPA contributions.
- Education history.
- Employment history.
- Professional organizations, career-related activities and civic activities.
- Honors and awards.
- Achievements in the parks and recreation field.
- Statements, if possible, from the candidate.
- Date and signature of the nominator.
- Letter of support from a Hall of Fame member or Hall of Fame Council member.

The candidate's nomination shall be judged on the following criteria:

- A successful record of accomplishment in the parks and recreation field in North Dakota.
- Active participation in NDRPA shall be a high consideration.

Hall of Fame recipients will be announced and recognized at the NDRPA Annual Awards Banquet Sept. 12 in Dickinson. The recipient will receive a plaque, and another plaque will be displayed at the ND Sports Hall of Fame in Jamestown.

Nomination forms are available on the NDRPA website at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com). The nomination deadline is July 16.

## Nominations Needed for 2018 NDRPA Awards

Recognizing the people and organizations that make great things happen in our communities is very important. If you have an organization or an individual who has made a difference in parks, recreation and conservation, nominate them for an NDRPA award. The deadline to submit nominations for awards is July 16.

The following awards are available to nominate individuals or organizations in your communities: Distinguished Professional Award, Outstanding Young Professional, Citizen Advocacy Award, Partnership Award, Golden Egg Award and Innovative Programming Award.

Visit the NDRPA website at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com) to download the nomination form.

## Explore Urban Trails at ND Trails Conference in Fargo

The seventh annual ND Trails Conference will be held Aug. 7-8 in Fargo. This conference is a joint effort of the ND Parks and Recreation Department and NDRPA. This year's conference will feature a great mix of field and classroom sessions. You will have the opportunity to explore the Red River by kayak or Lindenwood Park by bike. Educational sessions include topics such as rails to trails projects, grants and the Main Street Initiative. Registration will open in May at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).





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## Bakken X-Trek Back and Dirtier Than Ever

Williston Parks and Recreation District will hold the 4th annual Bakken X-Trek Obstacle Mud Run at Spring Lake Park Aug. 18. This fun family and team event includes 30 natural and man-made obstacles where participants get to climb, crawl, wade, swim and run. This year's slogan is "It just gets dirtier." There are two courses available: a one-mile course for children 5-11 years old and a 5K course for 12 and older, unless registered as a family.

Toby Osborn, a previous participant, is one enthusiastic runner and had her entire family, along with her brother's family, signed up last year. "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!"

With more than 400 people and 40 volunteers, the event is geared to the competitive athlete, families, corporate teambuilding and anyone in between. More information is available at [www.bakkenxtrek.com](http://www.bakkenxtrek.com) or the event's Facebook page.



## BLAST in Bismarck Teams Up with USTA Northern

Last spring, Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) was looking for new activities to offer as part of its BLAST (Bismarck's Life After School Time) initiative, a recreation-based program at selected elementary school sites where participants enjoy games and activities.

With the help of a grant from USTA Northern, Katrina Hanenberg, facility specialist at Capital Racquet and Fitness, spent a week at five BLAST sites, introducing tennis to more than 400 kids and leaders. The program has since taken off, expanding into five additional elementary schools in February, with plans to have tennis at all 19 BLAST sites by the end of this summer. Capital Racquet and Fitness is serving as a Net Generation community partner with each school, enabling them to receive free equipment and curriculum.

"The kids and leaders are loving it," Hanenberg says. "We've had many parents call us at Capital Racquet and Fitness asking how they can get their kids into additional tennis programs."



## WPRD Launches Fitness App with 2018 Fitness Challenge

Williston Parks and Recreation District (WPRD) has introduced a new fitness app specifically for their members and facility. The app is designed to connect and communicate better with their members, as well as being a motivational tool to increase member engagement regarding health and fitness.

One of the benefits of the app is offering fitness challenges, so WPRD kicked off 2018 by challenging their members to get 2,018 minutes of exercise in 60 days. "The goal of the challenge was to get people up and moving while promoting the park district as a space that offers support and encouragement," explains Jenn Shanahan, fitness and wellness manager. "We had 300 people sign up for the challenge and over half completed it." Participants were able to do any form

*Continued on page 10*



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For more information about Net Generation in USTA Northern, contact Carolyn Kramer at [kramer@northern.usta.com](mailto:kramer@northern.usta.com) or at (701) 238-1515.

# PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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of activity if it was structured outside of their work hours. To keep participants engaged, WPRD sent out weekly emails and posted videos announcing training tips and weekly prize winners. They also broke down the minutes, so there was a goal for each week. Those who met the weekly goal were entered to win gift cards from their sponsor, The Smiling Moose Deli. On the last day of the challenge, WPRD hosted a pool party and finishers received a t-shirt. This was a great opportunity for WPRD to connect with members and foster some friendly competition and motivation.

WPRD received feedback from members looking forward to the next challenge. One participant shared, "It seemed so impossible when you first announced it but got me motivated to get my butt to the gym. I enjoy the leaderboard and the somewhat 'competitive' side of it." Another member shared, "I love this challenge because it makes me more conscious to be active for at least 30 minutes a day. My husband and I are doing it together so our whole family has really gotten into being active daily this year. We would definitely be into another challenge! What a great idea to help a whole community to stay active."

Shanahan says, "Our goal was to get our community moving and supporting one another to be more active and living a healthier lifestyle. If just one person is exercising more because of this challenge, then we succeeded."



## Cottonwood Park Expands for Bismarck Softball Needs

Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) is working with all of the community's softball groups – men's, women's and girls' fastpitch associations

– in a capital campaign to bring more recreational opportunities to Bismarck.

Bismarck men's and women's slowpitch softball associations have the largest number of participants in the state. The fastpitch program is growing and does not have a dedicated complex. As a result, the plans for Cottonwood Park in Bismarck are four girls' fastpitch softball fields, four adult softball fields, concessions/restroom building, covered dugouts, pressbox/grandstand and expanded parking, playgrounds, picnic shelters and trail connections.

Bismarck Women's Slowpitch Softball Association, Bismarck Men's Slowpitch Softball Association and the Bismarck Youth Fastpitch Softball Association wholeheartedly support this project. They appreciate the value the fields will bring to the community in terms of strengthened programming and opportunities for additional participation for both adult and youth softball.

All three groups presented their need for additional fields to the BPRD Board of Park Commissioners and committed a total of \$700,000 to kick-start the campaign to raise \$1.35 million for the project. A campaign committee of volunteers has been formed and has a goal to raise an additional \$650,000 so this project becomes a community reality.

Cottonwood Park originated with a purchase of 89 acres of land in 1990. Today, the park consists of 225 acres of land with multiple recreational uses and community partners. When this current project is finished, there will be a total of 20 softball fields in Cottonwood Park. A lead gift has been secured and will be announced at a future date. At this time, 74 percent of the funds have been raised for the project.



*Continued on page 12*



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If you have any questions, please contact the State Procurement Office at 701-328-2740 or [infospo@nd.gov](mailto:infospo@nd.gov).



# PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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## Grand Am Adult Basketball Tournament Held in Grand Forks

Grand Forks Park District hosted the 31st Annual Adult Grand Am Basketball Tournament March 23-25. Despite the looming early spring blizzard that threatened travel plans, teams from all over the region flocked to Grand Forks where the tournament was held at five different venues across town. Nearly 140 teams competed in eight different divisions (five men's and three women's), and 192 games were played in total. Grand Forks Park District would like to thank all the teams who participated. The 2019 Adult Grand Am is scheduled for March 29-31.

## Renovation Complete for Pepsi All Seasons Arena

Mandan's Pepsi All Seasons Arena, a former hockey arena, was converted into gymnasiums to meet the city's indoor recreational needs, mainly for the park and school districts to utilize. The facility is owned by Mandan Park District but is on school district property. The park and school district have a 50/50 partnership, sharing renovation costs and time in the facility. The arena has two multipurpose courts and one wood court. The multipurpose flooring has striping for volleyball, basketball, soccer and tennis. Batting cages were also installed above the west multipurpose court. The locker rooms have been updated to fit wrestling and sub-varsity game needs. The goals of the renovation were to maximize the usage of the facility and provide more recreational opportunities for all ages. Pepsi All Seasons Arena will be available to the public to rent in May 2018.



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## Williston Parks Hosts 2018 Nerf Wars

Williston Parks and Recreation District hosted their second year of Mother vs. Son Nerf Wars. The event was a success with approximately 370 participants.

Participants first started in the prep stations putting on glow-in-the-dark makeup, having a little snack, taking a selfie with their mom and then picking out their Nerf gun. Then they headed upstairs into the "battlefield!"

The battlefield consisted of mostly recycled materials decorated with neon paint. The black lights were turned on and that is when the real fun began!



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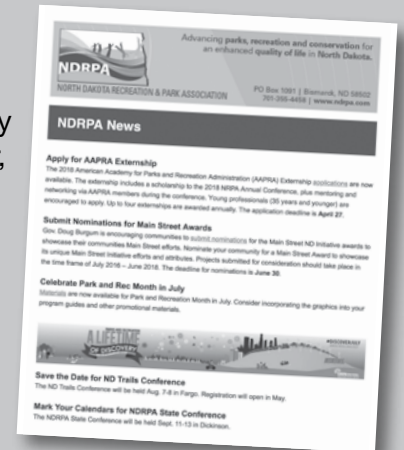
## Take Advantage of NDRPA Member Benefits

One of your benefits as NDRPA members is the association's monthly electronic newsletter, *NDRPA eUpdate*.

This publication includes a listing of available grant opportunities and job postings, as well as details about professional development, scholarships and awards.

If you don't receive this publication in your inbox each month, contact Shannon at NDRPA at 701-355-4458 or [sschutt@clearwatercommunications.net](mailto:sschutt@clearwatercommunications.net).

The latest news on NDRPA activities is always available on the website at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).



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# PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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## Rustad Recreation Center Undergoes Phase 2 Expansion Project

The West Fargo Park District (WFPD) announced the expansion of the Rustad Recreation Center. The initial vision for the center began in 2011 as the WFPD realized the rapid growth of their community meant the need for indoor recreational space. After extensive planning, it was decided gyms, a walking track and classrooms were the most crucial needs at that time.

Construction on the 44,612-square-foot facility began in June 2015, and Rustad Recreation Center opened to the public in August 2016. Since opening, countless number of people have enjoyed the benefits of the public facility. The original building included two full-sized basketball courts, four volleyball courts, three pickleball courts, a 1/10-mile elevated track, two classrooms, a meeting room and the new location of the park district's administrative offices. Shortly after opening, an additional six pickleball courts were added.

WFPD's Recreation Department quickly made use of the space, adding programming for all ages and abilities in the community. A very successful adult pickleball program started in September 2016, and it currently

has more than 225 players participating. Pickleball and volleyball tournaments have been a great success, having players travel from across the region and Canada to compete. Adult basketball and volleyball leagues were created with the new space, offering these leagues once again for adults in West Fargo. A youth volleyball program was created offering leagues and clinics to more than 600 participants, and the already established youth basketball league was able to expand to a record number of more than 400 participants. The Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx Academy visited Rustad and hosted a week-long camp for 125 elementary basketball players. In addition to sports programs, numerous creative arts and STEM classes were added with the additional classroom space. Sewing classes, pre-school art and video game design are now available for the community.

As the gyms filled and the rooms rented, WFPD quickly realized additions to the facility were in order. Planning for Phase 2 started in January 2017 when the staff started defining the space desired for growth and analyzed needs from within. Working with Zerr-Berg Architects, a plan to add an additional 55,095 square feet was developed. After completing the bidding process, WFPD announced the \$8.1 million addition would break ground this spring with plans to open summer 2019.

The Rustad Recreation Center Phase 2 Expansion will include indoor artificial turf (35x70 yards), a basketball court, volleyball courts, pickleball courts, fitness







track expansion, batting cages, indoor playground, classroom/meeting spaces and a creative arts studio. The addition will be attached to the southwest corner of the existing facility. Upon completion, Rustad Recreation Center will be a total of 99,707 square feet.

WFPD will continue to welcome the public to enjoy the use of the facility. The expansion will allow space for more activities and programs for people of all

ages, abilities and interest. No membership fee will be required. However, some programs and events will continue to have fees associated with them. The track will remain free to use and available during building hours. Private rentals will still be available when park district activities are not taking place.

*Continued on page 16*

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# PARK DISTRICT NEWS

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## Mandan Hosts FootGolf Tournament

Mandan Municipal Golf Course will be offering FootGolf for the second consecutive year. To kick off the season, the golf course is hosting a Cinco de Mayo FootGolf Tournament May 5 with a shotgun start at 3 p.m. Registration is limited to the first 18 teams. Prizes will be awarded to the best-dressed team and best scores. For more information and to register, visit [www.golfmandan.com](http://www.golfmandan.com).



## Fargo Park District to Host ND Senior Games

The ND Senior Games is once again coming to Fargo July 26-28. The event is part of the National Senior Games Association and helps promote healthy lifestyles for adults 50 and



older through education, fitness and sport. This multi-day, multi-sport event is devoted to individuals ages 50 and older and gives them an opportunity to compete with others in their age group.

This year is a qualifying year for the National Senior Games. Participants who place high enough in the Fargo events can qualify to compete in the 2019 National Games held in Albuquerque, N.M.

The current list of events includes archery, basketball, badminton, bowling, cycling, golf, horseshoes, pickleball, racquetball, softball, swimming, table tennis, tennis, track and field, power walk and 5K road race.

For more information, visit [NDSeniorGames.com](http://NDSeniorGames.com).

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# Dickinson Parks and Recreation to Host 2018 NDRPA State Conference

Save the date for the 2018 NDRPA State Conference Sept. 11-13, hosted by Dickinson Parks and Recreation. There will be a great line-up of speakers, interesting activities and plenty of time for networking.

## Education

Learn how to be a Park Champion from Jayni Rasmussen, NRPA's advocacy and outreach manager. Her keynote presentation will focus on how everyone can be a year-round ambassador for parks and recreation.

## Networking

This year's Tuesday activities include a golf scramble at the Heart River Golf Course and a tour of Fluffy Fields Winery. On Wednesday afternoon, the facilities tour will include the ice center, community center/outdoor pool and the Dakota Community Bank Ball Park.

## Exhibitor and Sponsor Opportunities

Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities are available. Booth space is limited to 26 spaces and will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. NDRPA thanks our early sponsors: Tessman Company, Associated Pool Builders, Inc., BC6 Builders, Dakota Playground and

Grondahl Recreation/BCI Burke. Available sponsorships are listed on the NDRPA website at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).

## Silent Auction

This year's conference will include a silent auction to raise funds for scholarships. Each park district is encouraged to bring at least one auction item valued at \$50 or more.

## Conference Scholarships

NDRPA is pleased to announce five full registration scholarships will be available to park board commissioners or staff from park districts that do not have full-time, year-round staff. Scholarships will be available in June.

## Registration

Registration will open in July. A block of rooms has been reserved at Ramada Grand Dakota Hotel in Dickinson. The deadline for hotel rooms is Aug. 13. Call 701-483-5600 for room reservations.

More details, including a registration form, will be provided in the summer issue of *FOCUS*.



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# COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Jennifer Heisler has been a member of the Cando Park Board for three years. Another board member had asked if she would be interested in running for the park board, as another board member's term had come due. Heisler obtained signatures to be on the ballot and the rest is history.

Heisler and another board member oversee most of the concerns that may arise with the local swimming pool and make sure the city park is safe and clean. One of her goals as a park board member is to ensure the pool is adequately staffed and managed so it is safe, affordable and fun for everyone. Heisler says, "I feel that for a small community, we have a very nice, well-maintained swimming pool. It is a place that many children and families enjoy in the summer."

Summer swimming lessons at the Cando Pool draw students from several area communities. They are known to have affordable lessons and low student-to-teacher ratio. Heisler said it is important to her that Cando continues to maintain that reputation.

Another goal for Heisler is to ensure the park equipment is well-maintained and clean for community members to enjoy during the short North Dakota summers. She said she enjoys seeing the city park alive with activity in the summer, from parties and picnics to volleyball, basketball and children playing on the equipment.

One of the challenges Heisler said park board members face is finding responsible staff to run the activities. She notes, "Fortunately, we do have reliable staff who run and assist in maintaining our all-seasons arena, which is used mainly for skating and hockey during the cold months. And, we recently rehired a pool manager for the second summer, which will help with consistency at the pool."

"Being a park board member makes me be an active volunteer member in my community," Heisler explains. "When community members are upset about specific things, I have learned to handle their concerns, as well as be open to their suggestions or criticism."

Some of Heisler's favorite park and recreation activities include swimming laps at the pool and picnics at the park.

The Cando Park Board has been busy this last winter with several updates to their skating arena, including the windows and new flooring in the bathroom and kitchen/concession area. They also painted the concession area of the arena.

They offer a number of programs and activities to the community, including winter skating and lessons; family hour and open swim at the pool, along with pool parties and swimming lessons; sand volleyball; horseshoes; basketball courts; tennis courts, grills and picnic tables for summer barbeques; and a very active summer T-ball and baseball program.





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# Apply for ND Main Street Awards

Launched by Gov. Doug Burgum, North Dakota's Main Street Initiative is a shared vision of healthy, vibrant communities that through fiscally responsible planning attract the talent needed to support our growing economy.

The Main Street Initiative is focused on three pillars of economic success: a skilled workforce; smart, efficient infrastructure; and healthy, vibrant communities to help North Dakota compete in an increasingly global economy.

The Main Street Awards honor communities who show excellence in these principles by actively working to differentiate and enhance the quality of life for their residents, present and future. The Main Street Awards are a collaborative effort of the Office of Gov. Doug Burgum, ND Department of Commerce and ND League of Cities (NDLC). The 2018 awards will be presented during the NDLC Annual Conference Sept. 13-15 at the Grand Forks Alerus Center.

Nominations should be submitted electronically at [www.MainStreetND.com](http://www.MainStreetND.com) and will be accepted until June 30. A selection committee made up of collaborating agencies and partners will judge entries.

Projects submitted for consideration should take place in the time frame of July 2016 – June 2018.

## Main Street Community Dashboard

According to the ND Department of Commerce, the cloud-based Main Street Community Dashboard will provide community leaders publicly available, but not always easy to find, information that can be used to help grow healthy, vibrant, financially solvent communities.

The dashboard continues to evolve. It includes community profile information; state, county and city financial information; and education highlights. Last month, increased reporting across many livability statistics, from child care availability to recreation and healthcare, was added to the dashboard.

Beginning this summer, the dashboard will provide the option for city leaders to edit and update specific information that may help their economic development efforts and provide transparency of government. The dashboard will continue to be enhanced based on user feedback.

The dashboard is one of several tools being delivered through the Main Street Initiative to help communities who are building for the future. Visit [www.mainstreetnd.com](http://www.mainstreetnd.com) to view the dashboard.

## AWARD TYPES

### ND Legendary Heritage Award

This award recognizes communities focused on preserving and protecting the historical assets of their towns. By honoring historical buildings and structures, North Dakota's communities connect generations of residents and inspire community pride.

### Revitalizer Award

This award recognizes communities that take empty or dilapidated lots or structures and revitalize them with updated infrastructure, mixed-use retail, residential, parks or other unique assets. Communities should demonstrate use of existing infrastructure, infusing it with new and innovative ideas, to ensure the most efficient use of public resources.

### Vibrancy Award

This award recognizes communities that have established cultural experiences, art appreciation, fine arts opportunities and/or community events which draw residents and visitors. By providing a variety of experiences to residents and visitors, the vibrancy of North Dakota will continue to grow.

### Mobilizer Award

This award recognizes community efforts in creating convenient, inviting and multimodal transportation options for residents and visitors. These projects put a focus on walkability and biking and create accessible communities that help North Dakota to improve its health, economy and connectivity.

### Differentiator Award

This award recognizes a community that finds its unique strength, community asset or niche while using it to attract business, workforce, visitors and enhance resident's quality of life.

### Future Leaders Empowerment Award

This award recognizes a community that seeks to engage students in creating a healthy, vibrant community through leadership development, community planning or workforce exploration in community industries.

### Main Street Excellence Award

This award will be presented to four individual communities in the population categories of: 10,000 and above; 9,999 to 1,500; 1,499 to 500; and less than 500. These awards will recognize communities whose efforts emulate the three pillars of Main Street success: smart, efficient infrastructure; 21st century workforce; and healthy, vibrant communities.

# Online Tree Inventory/Planning Tool Available in North Dakota

Good forest stewardship maximizes the tree value and minimizes tree conflicts. The benefits of trees are numerous: saving energy costs, reducing stormwater runoff, removing air pollution, providing health benefits and lowering violence and crime. In fact, trees are the only component of a community's infrastructure that increase in value over time.

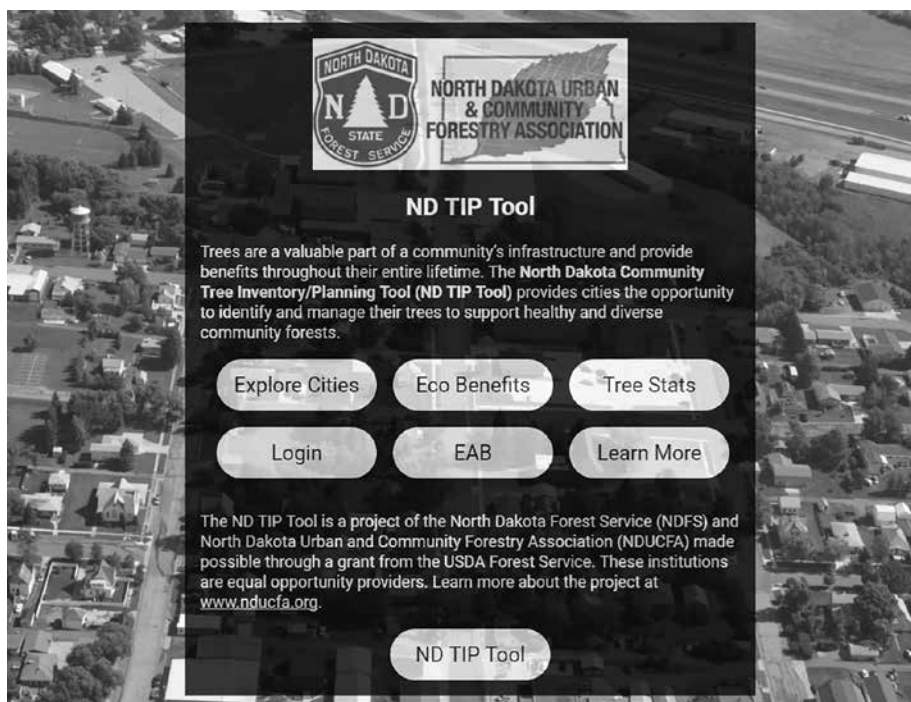
In small and mid-size cities across North Dakota, cities and park districts often work together to manage public green spaces and trees. A new tool is now available to help manage community forests in the state.

The ND Urban and Community Forestry Association (NDUCFA) is pleased to offer the online ND Community Tree Inventory/Planning Tool (ND TIP Tool) in partnership with the ND Forest Service. Supported by a U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service grant, small and midsize North Dakota cities now have free access to the ND TIP Tool, which provides useful information about community trees to improve planning and increase tree diversity. The tool is accessible at <https://ndcitytrees.org>.

Currently, 91 cities have their tree inventories uploaded into the ND TIP Tool. Almost all of these cities benefited from a rapid street tree inventory conducted by the NDFS over the last five years via the Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) project. CTAP cities must view a training webinar before they are able to log in to access and update their online tree data in the TIP Tool.

This grant-funded project is designed to foster good tree stewardship to increase species diversity and mitigate potential impacts of invasive species, resulting in healthier and more resilient community forests across North Dakota.

Learn more about the grant project at <https://nducfa.org/forestry/grant-project/>. Contact NDUCFA at [office@nducfa.org](mailto:office@nducfa.org) or 701-355-4458 with any questions.





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# Why Net Generation? Did We Mention It Is FREE?

Net Generation is the United States Tennis Association's (USTA) groundbreaking initiative welcoming a new generation of players into the next era of tennis. By offering full support of coaches, schools and parents, the USTA is looking to break new ground on and off the court with youngsters ages 5-18 by focusing on empowerment, unity and play. Through a comprehensive program of adaptable curricula, teaching and learning tools, promotional and communications materials, and player and provider incentives, Net Generation aims to capture the imagination of kids of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels.

"It has definitely created a buzz," says Oliver Summers, tennis manager at Fargo Park District's Courts Plus Community Fitness.

So what makes Net Generation different from past USTA initiatives? For the first time in history, all Net Generation providers must submit to a free national background check and complete a SafeSport education course developed in conjunction with the U.S. Olympic Committee before becoming an approved vendor.

Another great feature of Net Generation is all approved programs and coaches are listed on a national Net Generation directory located at [www.netgeneration.com](http://www.netgeneration.com). This allows parents with children that want to play



tennis and looking for programming to go to one central location to find the program that works best for them in their community, while coaches and providers have a new outlet to promote and grow their business for free.

All approved providers also have access to free marketing and promotional materials through the Net Generation Marketing Generator. Now tennis deliverers can produce consistent, customized and professional marketing materials with a recognizable brand identity to current and future customers with flyers, posters, postcards, lawn signs and more.

Net Generation also encourages partnerships between community programs, including parks and recreation and local schools. All receive a free equipment package from the USTA worth more than \$1,000 while introducing more kids to the joys of tennis, providing a win-win for everyone.

"I've had gym teachers in schools that I've never even heard from contact me about Net Generation and how to get tennis into their schools," Summers says. "We just had an open day for local elementary schools and used the free equipment we received from the USTA. It was perfect!"

Net Generation also uses a new and easy-to-use curriculum designed by the USTA and has created a free mobile coaching app, which includes pre-made lesson plans, videos, competencies and assessments for red, orange and green ball levels right at one's fingertips.

"Being able to access already-created lesson plans or customize our own on the app has been great. We are utilizing those for our summer park board lessons," Summers says.

Perhaps best of all for Summers was everything was easy and free. "I have had to sign up for a lot of things in my career, and the registration process for Net Generation was easy. And for all the free things we have received, why wouldn't a provider want to do it?"

To become part of the changing face of youth tennis and to receive all of these great free incentives, visit [www.netgeneration.com](http://www.netgeneration.com).



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# PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



**Cody Alyea** was hired as the park mechanic with Mandan Park District (MPD). Cody previously worked at Schumacher Transportation doing mechanical work. He grew up in Mandan and enjoys spending his free time with his wife, Ali. He looks forward to working and continuing to learn with MPD.



**Randy Arndt** is a carpenter for the Fargo Park District (FPD). Randy likes to fish, hunt, go to the lake and spend time with family. He has a wife and two girls, Estelle and Julia.



**Leticia Barrera** is a cook for FPD's Valley Senior Services. Leticia has two children, Abe Jr. and MJ. She loves to make food and travel.



**Jared Connell** is the youth personal training coordinator at Grand Forks Park District's Choice Health & Fitness. Jared is the newest personal training coordinator to join their team. He facilitates youth members and athletes to train with Choice's personal trainers, along with conducting training and performance enhancement sessions himself. Originally from Bismarck, Jared studied kinesiology at the University of North Dakota.



**Brandon Lozensky** was hired as the parks and facility supervisor with MPD. Brandon spent the last 20 years of his career working in landscape. He is very excited about his opportunity to work for MPD.



**Teri Welch** was hired as the accounting manager for MPD. Her previous work experience includes working in the accounting department for Bismarck Parks and Recreation District. In her spare time, Teri likes to travel, play piano, read and spend time outdoors with her husband, two children and two dogs.

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# Park and Recreation Month Quick Start Guide

By Cort Jones, NRPA Communications Manager

By now, you've almost certainly started planning your programming for the summer months, and we hope that a big part of that plan is participating in Park and Recreation Month! As many of you know, our theme this year is "A Lifetime of Discovery" and we're challenging you to show your community the often "undiscovered" offerings of your park and recreation agency.

To get you started, here are five tips to help you promote Park and Recreation Month in your community and celebrate during the month of July!

## 1. Hang the Park and Recreation Month Poster

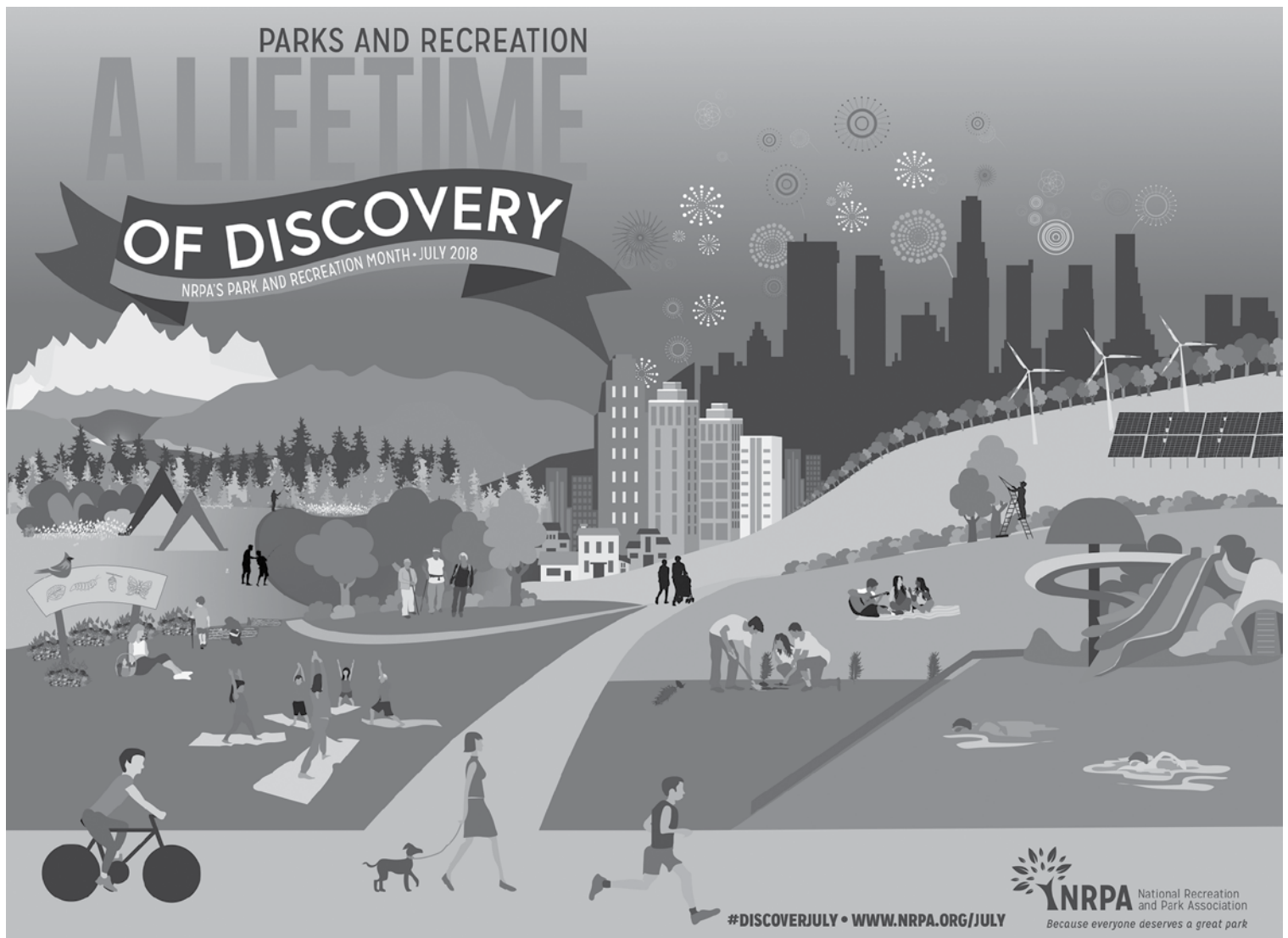
The easiest thing you can do to celebrate Park and Recreation Month is to hang the official Park and Recreation Month poster somewhere visible to others. You can download and print copies from the toolkit, or you can hang the printed version that comes with the May issue of *Parks & Recreation* magazine.

## 2. Show Your Support on Social Media

Another great way to show your support is by sharing information about Park and Recreation Month on social media. The first thing you can do is use the hashtag #DiscoverJuly on all your social media posts about Park and Recreation Month. You can also update your avatars to be the Park and Recreation Month logo or use the Facebook and Twitter header images supplied in the toolkit. We'll also be providing sample social media posts that you can easily customize and share with your community.

## 3. Proclaim July as Park and Recreation Month

Many municipalities will issue formal proclamations to acknowledge special days and events. Park and Recreation is no different. You can ask your town, city or community council to proclaim July as Park and Recreation Month.



On the website, we have tips for getting July proclaimed as Park and Recreation Month as well as a template proclamation you can personalize and use.

#### 4. Host an Open House Day for Your Community

This year we're encouraging your agency to host an "open house." This is a chance to showcase all the great things you do for your community, and a chance to show residents that A Lifetime of Discovery awaits them at their local parks and recreation centers. The national Park and Recreation Month Open House Day will be held on July 21, and we will be providing you with all the materials you need to promote the event.

#### 5. Submit a Press Release about Park and Recreation Month

We will be providing you with a sample press release template, so you can explain what Park and Recreation Month is and the ways in which your agency will be celebrating. This is a great opportunity to gain media attention for your parks, facilities and programs, as well as include yourself

as part of the broader media push around Park and Recreation Month. We always include tips for sharing your press release with reporters.

In addition to these five tips, there are many other ways you can participate in Park and Recreation Month. We'll be releasing information about our annual contest in the coming months, as well as Park and Recreation Month Activity Sheets, that can be printed and used with any of your camps or events involving youth.

Our main goal behind Park and Recreation Month is to promote the great work you are doing and to let the public know that July is the perfect time to get out and discover the great things happening at their local parks and recreation centers. This July we are celebrating all the "undiscovered" roles of parks and recreation, and we can't wait to celebrate with you! As always, if you have any questions about the materials or how to participate, feel free to email me at [cjones@nrpa.org](mailto:cjones@nrpa.org). We can't wait for July!

The Park and Recreation Month Toolkit can be found at [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).



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# NRPA Report Includes Key Data for Park and Recreation Agencies Nationwide

To be a leader in your industry, it is vital to know where you stand against your peers — parks and recreation is no different. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) gives park and recreation professionals the data they need to be industry leaders, while best serving their communities with the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review. This report, with its accompanying interactive and customizable online tools, is the most comprehensive resource of park and recreation data and insights in the United States.

The 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review replaces outdated national standards with key metrics that empower park and recreation agencies to compare themselves with their peers and identify best practices. Key findings from the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance

Review show the typical park and recreation agency:

- Has 10.1 acres of park land per 1,000 residents
- Has 1 park for every 2,114 residents
- Has 7.9 staff members per 10,000 residents
- Has operating expenditures per capita of \$78.26
- Recovers 28 percent of operating expenditures through revenue generation
- Shows that 55 percent of agencies offer afterschool care and 84 percent of agencies offer summer camps

The 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review was produced using data from 1,069 park and recreation agencies in NRPA Park Metrics, NRPA's benchmarking resource that assists park and recreation professionals in the effective management and planning of their

operating resources and capital facilities. The report not only provides benchmarks, but also shows the breadth and depth of activities and roles that local park and recreation agencies are performing.

"Park and recreation agencies are engines of economic activity with a vital public service mission," says Barbara Tulipane, CAE, NRPA president and CEO. "That's why it's important for us to provide them with key data they can use to get the support and funding they need to positively impact the lives of every community member they serve."

The 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review helps park and recreation professionals evaluate the performance of their agencies and understand how they relate to their peers in terms of staffing, budget, amount of park space and facilities. Combining this data with other resources, such as NRPA's Americans' Engagement with Parks Survey, Facility Market Reports, Economic Impact of Local Parks Report, Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services Report, and Park Pulse polls can help agencies receive the support they need to provide tailored services that meet the unique needs of their community.

To view the report, interactive tables and customizable reports, visit [www.nrpa.org/apr](http://www.nrpa.org/apr).



# Parks and Recreation Benefits Everyone

NDRPA believes public investment in parks and recreation is necessary to achieve positive economic, health, environmental and social/community benefits for all North Dakotans. Parks and recreation are essential public services and a valuable part of community infrastructure. Benefits include:

## Economic

- Attracts businesses and workforce
- Creates employment opportunities
- Attracts visitors
- Increases property values

## Environmental

- Purifies the air and water
- Manages stormwater
- Provides habitat for animals, fish and birds
- Connects children and adults with nature

## Health

- Improves physical, mental and social wellbeing
- Reduces health care costs
- Provides alternative and active transportation opportunities

## Social/Community

- Creates community image and sense of place
- Increases social connections and learning
- Offers safe, affordable and accessible spaces



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