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The Official Publication of the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association

Summer 2022





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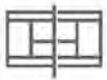
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When I sat down to write my president's message and I looked at the date, the thoughts of summer fleeting from my fingertips rushed over me. It's July 10, and it feels like summer has just begun. But back-to-school lists are being distributed and school supplies have begun taking over the summer fun section in the big box stores. Nope, I am not accepting it! While I truly appreciate the fact that we get to celebrate all four seasons in North Dakota, I am not ready to say goodbye to summer.

As park and recreation professionals, there truly is never a "slow" season, but for many of us, summer brings a whole new meaning to busy. Ice arena managers, bear with me here as we often tell Bob (MAYSA Arena Manager Bob Gillen), "Winter is coming."

Recently, a local blogger wrote an article regarding our Roosevelt Park Pool here in Minot. My husband sent me the link last week and as I clicked on it, I honestly didn't know what to expect. In the world of social media, I find myself preparing for the worst when in fact, the article gave me all the good feels. Her article referred to the Roosevelt Park Pool as its own community, a place where people go to meet their neighbors, for kids to reconnect with school friends they haven't seen in a while, and even a place to make new friends.

Often, when I visit our facilities, I look at them with the lens of a parks employee. After reading that article, I decided to load up our girls that evening and bring them to the Roosevelt Park Pool. We took in the pool from the perspective of a park patron. I watched as our 13-year-old walked in, and seeing school friends, immediately looked the other direction. She was slightly embarrassed or possibly mortified that she was seen at the pool with her mom and 9-year-old sister. Our

carefree 9-year-old cannonballed into the deep end while getting yelled at by the lifeguard to stop running. Rae found a new "best friend" within minutes. But when I asked her new friend's name, she shrugged her shoulders followed by "I don't know."

There were grandparents with grandkids, couples, teenagers, and a mom arguing with her 3-year-old about why they were not stopping at Dairy Queen on the way home. By all accounts, I would say it was an average 80-degree North Dakota evening at the pool. I envisioned similar pool experiences were being shared in all the "big towns" and "small towns" across the state.

To the average person, that trip to the pool seems routine. They don't know the months of work that goes into hiring lifeguards, lifeguard certifications, CPO training, filling the pool, and hoping everything operates the same as it did when we drained it last fall, or the inevitable sleepless nights that come with being responsible for hundreds of swimmers every year. But that's why we do what we do. We get to provide our citizens with prime facilities and experiences every day. We get to create an environment for them to make new memories with families and a place to meet new friends even if they don't remember their names.

Thank you all for your countless hours making North Dakota a better place to live, work and play. Thanks for creating little communities inside our cities that make everyone feel like they have a place to call their own.



Elly DesLauriers, NDRPA President

 **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**SEPT 13-15**  
NDRPA State Conference,  
Minot

**SEPT 20-22**  
NRPA Annual Conference,  
Phoenix

**OCT 15**  
FOCUS Deadline

## 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.



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*FOCUS* is the official newsletter of the North Dakota Recreation & Park Association (NDRPA). It is distributed quarterly to almost 900 parks and recreation professionals and posted on the NDRPA website. Submission of articles and photographs are encouraged in digital format to ndrpaoffice@gmail.com. Photographs should be high-resolution (300 dpi or greater). Advertising information is available online at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).

**Next *FOCUS* deadline:** Oct. 15, 2022

Cover photo: Roosevelt Park, Minot Park District

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## Submit Articles and Photos for *FOCUS*

Take advantage of the opportunity to share successes and activities in your park district with fellow parks and recreation professionals by submitting articles for inclusion in *FOCUS*. No news is too small. *FOCUS* is a resource for park districts to gain insight and ideas from each other. Sharing stories about the events or projects you are working on in your communities provides that insight and ideas.



Plus, highlight new staff or employee promotions by sending in short bios and headshots for People on the Move.

NDRPA is always looking for cover photo options too!

*FOCUS* deadlines are Jan. 15, April 15, July 15, and Oct. 15. Send your stories and photos to us at [ndrpaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ndrpaoffice@gmail.com). Photos and graphics must be 300 dpi in .jpeg format. Contact the NDRPA office at 701-355-4458 or [ndrpaoffice@gmail.com](mailto:ndrpaoffice@gmail.com) with questions.

## 2022 NDRPA Annual Business Meeting

NDRPA will hold its annual business meeting at the NDRPA State Conference Sept. 13-15 in Minot. Agenda items include election of board members and review of association activities. An agenda and associated materials will be distributed to members via email prior to the meeting. All members are encouraged to attend.

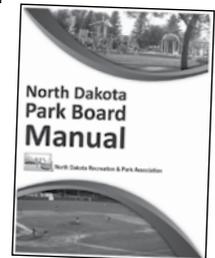
## Plan to Attend the 2022 NPRA Annual Conference in Phoenix

The 2022 NPRA Annual Conference, the largest gathering of park and recreation professionals in the world, is Sept. 20-22 in Phoenix. This year's conference will feature thought-provoking keynote speakers, dynamic education sessions, an exploration-worthy exhibit hall, and many ways to network and connect with peers from across the country. There is also a virtual option to attend with 45 speed sessions and 18 live-streamed one-hour education sessions. All sessions will be available for 60 days post-conference. Learn more and register at [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).



## ND Park Board Manual and Park Board Commissioner Training Webinar Available

The North Dakota Park Board Manual equips both new and experienced park board commissioners and staff with the information necessary to effectively carry out their authorities, roles and responsibilities. The manual also includes sample documents such as a joint use agreement and board member job description.



NDRPA also has a Park Board Commissioner Training Webinar available that is an introduction to the topics and material provided in the manual.

For more information about the manual and training webinar, visit [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com).



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# COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

## Amber Klingbeil – Garrison



Amber Klingbeil

Amber Klingbeil moved from Mandan to Garrison with her two daughters in 2015 and realized right away the small town just off the north shore of Lake Sakakawea was where she was meant to be.

Two years after arriving in town, a position opened on the Garrison Parks and Recreation Board and

board member Heidi Smith approached Klingbeil to see if she was interested in the vacant position. Klingbeil's first thought was her family, then other families. "I was new to the area at the time and since I have children that are involved in the programs, I thought it was a great way to get involved with the community and meet people," Klingbeil recalled.

"My girls are everything to me and the reason why I joined the park board to begin with," Klingbeil said. "We enjoy using the pool and played ball until they outgrew it. We now spend our free time camping, kayaking, hiking, and enjoying time together around campfires in the summertime. Our winters are filled with movies, board games and anything else we can do together."

That includes making time to enjoy Garrison's parks and recreational facilities.

The park district offers a variety of year-round activities, including swimming, skating, baseball, and softball. Klingbeil is excited about one of the district's newest activities, kickball for 4- and 5-year-old children. "It seems to be a hit that I am looking forward to seeing grow over the years. I enjoy all of the activities that we offer, and how many we are able to offer," Klingbeil added. "My goals are to



make all of the programs that we offer the best that they can be."

The Garrison Park District also offers swimming lessons starting with level 1 and going up to level 7, and many ball programs, including kickball, T-ball, Pee Wee (ages 8-10), Little League (ages 11-12), Babe Ruth (ages 13-15,) and a girls softball skill building program in the summer months. During the winter, it has an indoor/outdoor skating rink that is generally open from December until March or April, depending on the weather.

Klingbeil explained the park district is not simply maintaining existing facilities and offerings but expanding and upgrading when possible.

"Our board, along with the help of another organization in town, has been working on and just got the approval for a grant to update our pool," Klingbeil said. "The first part of this project will upgrade the pool's pump house. The second part will work on updates needed for the pool house, including making it wheelchair accessible, while finishing up with the possibility of adding a splash pad where our kiddie pool used to be."

Klingbeil said the board also is working on a grant that would help update the softball fields, which are a work in progress.

"I am very proud of this board and all of the small changes that we have made over the years to continue making our facilities and programs the best that they can be," Klingbeil noted. "I am excited to see this pool project move forward and what the possibility of updating our softball fields will bring to the community."

The most challenging part of being a board member is change, she noted. "Whether everyone looks at the change as being good or not, it's still hard," she pointed out. "Not everyone likes change, even though it can be necessary for improvement."

Klingbeil considers NDRPA's *FOCUS* magazine a valuable resource for information. "I enjoy seeing what other areas are doing to improve their communities and parks," she said.



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## Ground Broken for Fargo Parks Sports Complex

The Fargo Park District and Fargo Park District Foundation broke ground May 5 on the Fargo Parks Sports Complex. The 260,000-square-foot building will address a critical need for more indoor recreation space, said Dave Leker, executive director of the Fargo Park District.

The facility will provide a community space for a more active and healthier Fargo. More than 13,000 local kids will benefit from the project in its first year of operation. The project includes one full-size indoor soccer turf field, four full-sized basketball courts, administrative offices, multipurpose community space, an indoor 350-meter walking track, and the new home to Sanford Power.

Once completed in 2024, the project will attract more than 600,000 visitors annually. This highly impactful project is a testament to the power of public/private partnership. The project is a collective effort made possible in part by the support of more than 20 community-minded project partners.

Following the official groundbreaking, McGough Construction began construction of the Fargo Parks Sports Complex on 100 acres on the southern edge of Fargo just west of Interstate 29. Construction updates are posted at [FargoParks.com](http://FargoParks.com).



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## Kramer Retires from Dickinson Parks and Recreation

Dickinson Parks and Recreation (DPR) Executive Director James Kramer has announced his retirement, effective Aug. 15, 2022. During his career, Kramer was instrumental in the creation of the West River Community Center in 2004 and to the district being named a National Gold Medal Finalist in 2022. He worked to bring many prestigious events, programs and places of recreation to Dickinson, including the 1996 13-Year-Old Babe Ruth World Series. In 2002, Kramer helped get a half-cent sales tax increase passed by public vote to build and fund the West River Community Center that has since been expanded twice. More recently, Kramer participated in planning for the new Dickinson State University Sports Complex slated to open in 2023.

Kramer began his professional career in 1991 as the district's recreation manager. He was director of Williston Parks and Recreation in 1996 before returning to DPR as the business/finance manager in 1997. In 2001, he became the executive director. Kramer has held numerous positions at the local, state and national levels. He served as NDRPA president, on the board of directors, professional

development chair, public policy chair, treasurer, and currently serves on the Hall of Fame Council.

Kramer also served as a member of Gov. Jack Dalrymple's Task Force for Property Tax Relief and the North Dakota Department of Commerce Task Force for Smart Restart. He currently sits on the



James Kramer

board of directors for the North Dakota Public Health Insurance Trust. At the national level, Kramer served on the American Parks and Recreation Society's board of directors and was a Midwest Regional Council Member for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Kramer was awarded the NDRPA Outstanding Young Professional Award in 1997, NRPA Presidential Citation of Achievement in 2005, NDRPA Distinguished Professional Award in 2011, and was inducted into the NDRPA Hall of Fame in 2016.



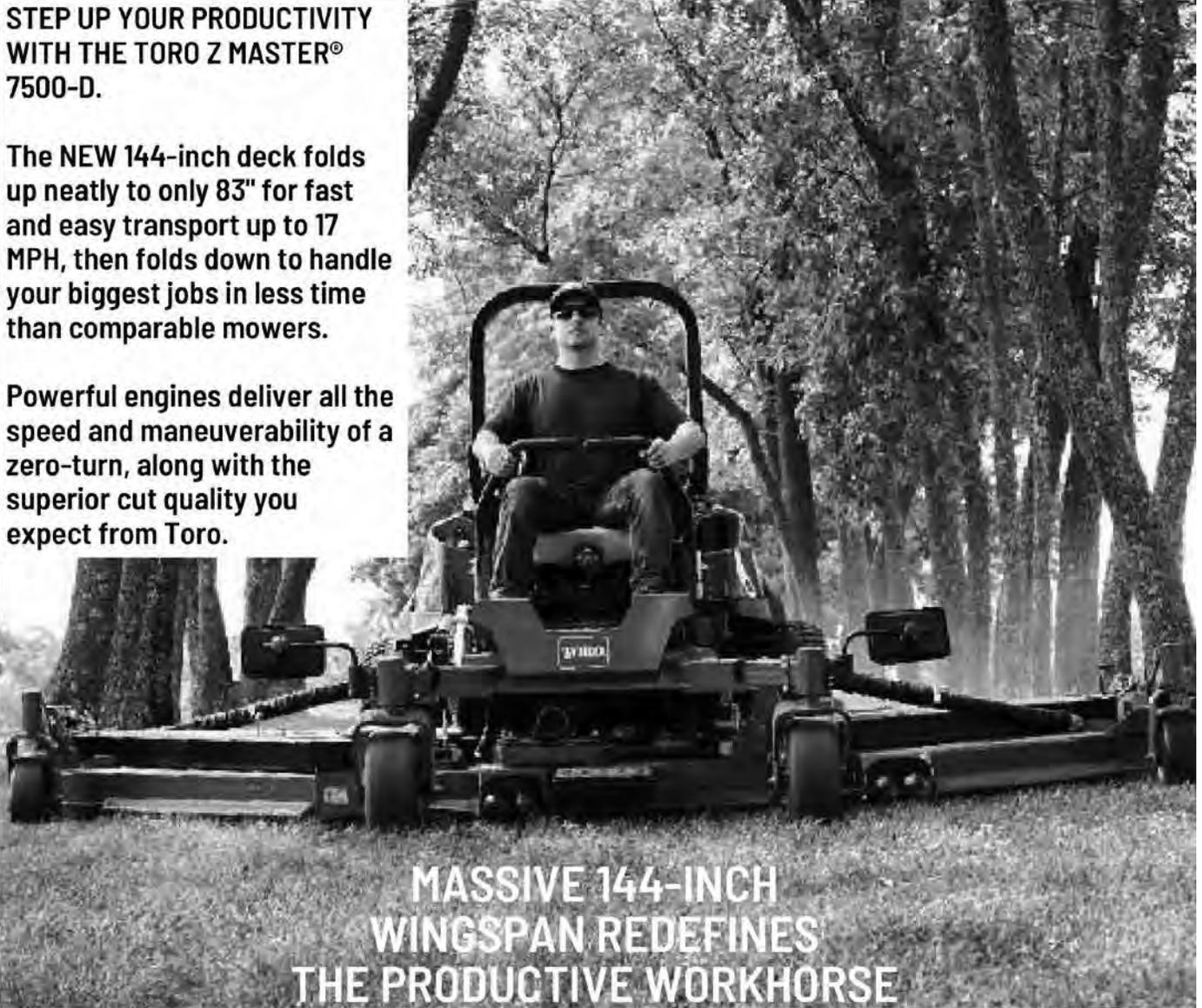


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## Bismarck Dedicates New Neighborhood Park



Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) dedicated Bismarck's newest park, A. James Silbernagel Memorial Park, on June 30.

The 4.88-acre neighborhood park was established as part of the City of Bismarck's Neighborhood Park and Open Space Policy, which has provided for parks and open spaces within new developments since 2013.

The park is named in honor of Dr. Arnold James "Jim" Silbernagel, a longtime Bismarck optometrist and farmer/rancher who passed away in 2010. He and his family purchased a farm/ranch in northeast Bismarck in 1971, and much of this land, including the area where the park is located, is now the Silver Ranch subdivision.

Park features include a nature-themed playground, accessible picnic shelter, native pollinator garden, and trail connection to Silver Ranch Greenway Trail.



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## Fargo Park District Bloom Tracker and Selfie Stand in Orchard Park

Orchard Glen Park is a community orchard featuring beautiful blooms in the spring season. This year the Fargo Park District created a bloom tracker on *FargoParks.com* for the public to follow the bloom progress at the orchard.

Photos of the bloom progress were uploaded on *FargoParks.com*. A list of park trees and dates of their expected bloom were also available. Orchard trees include Toka Plum, Patten Pear, Zestar, Trader Mulberry, Snowsweet, Royal Raindrops Crabapple, Kinder Crisp, Flowering Crab, Early Gold Pear, Evans Bali Cherry, Dolgo Crabapple, Compass Cherry Plum, and Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry.

Along with the bloom tracker, the Fargo Park District also installed a four-foot selfie stand that has two 2-foot-by-4-foot panels mounted on each side of the stand. On one side of the panels was a ledge on which park users could set their phone to take a picture. On the other side, a set of five steps were listed letting park users know to share their photos on social media with the Fargo Park District by using #FargoParks.

The selfie stand has been used at different locations throughout the Fargo Park District's parks. The sign has been transported to multiple park locations that include in front of the Lindenwood Park fountain and at a few different summer event locations, like Island Park.



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## Beyer Retires from Wahpeton Post After 41 Years



Wayne Beyer

Longtime Wahpeton Parks and Recreation Director Wayne Beyer retired on May 30, 2022, after 41 years in the position. The NDRPA Hall-of-Famer joined Wahpeton Parks and Recreation as recreation director in 1980 and took on the role of parks and recreation director in 1981.

Under Beyer's guidance, the city of Wahpeton added and expanded many of the programs that residents of Wahpeton and the surrounding area enjoy. He was inducted into the NDRPA Hall of Fame in 2013 and continued to serve the citizens of Wahpeton for another nine years. He was involved with NDRPA for more than three decades and held numerous positions, including president three times, president-elect, board of directors, secretary, treasurer, FOCUS editor, and membership chair.

Through the years, numerous other organizations

have benefitted from Beyer's leadership and involvement, including the North Dakota Council on the Arts, North Dakota Babe Ruth Baseball, North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association, River Keepers, Richland County Historical Society, and Wahpeton Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Beyer earned many awards during his career, including the North Dakota Wildlife Federation North Dakota Sportsman of the Year Award in 2011; the North Dakota Sports Hall of Fame honors for Special Olympics North Dakota in 2009; North Dakota Amateur Softball Association in 1999; North Dakota Game and Fish Department Boat and Water Safety Educator of the Year in 2006; and National Arbor Day Association Sterling Morton Award in 2005.

Beyer received an associate degree from the North Dakota State School of Science in 1976 and a bachelor's degree in physical/health education from Minnesota State University, Moorhead in 1979. He later earned the designation of Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).



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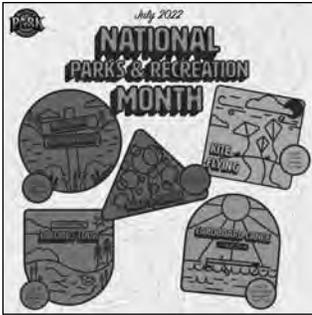
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# PARK DISTRICT NEWS



## Minot Parks Celebrated Parks and Recreation Month

The Minot Park District celebrated Parks and Recreation Month in July. A variety of activities were held for residents of all ages and abilities, including a scavenger hunt, build a bubble at Oak Park, birding tour at Woodland Trail, kite flying at the soccer complex, and a cardboard canoe race at the Roosevelt Park Pool.

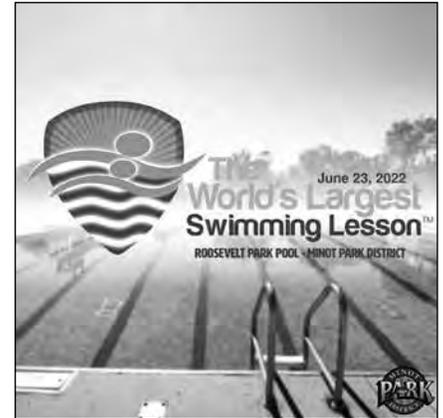
Minot Park District Marketing and Development Director Elly DesLauriers said the district designated July as a month to celebrate the city's parks, facilities, programs, and events.

## Roosevelt Park Pool Hosts World's Largest Swim Lesson

The Minot Park District partnered with the Minot Swim Club to hold the World's Largest Swim Lesson June 23 at the Roosevelt Park Pool.

The annual event, coordinated by the World Waterpark Association, brings together leading water safety and training organizations around the world to send one focused message – *Swimming Lessons Save Lives™*.

Hundreds of swim instructors in 14 countries and 42 states across the U.S. kicked off the official start of summer by teaching tens of thousands of kids vital water safety skills to raise awareness and help prevent childhood drowning.



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## Success Story | Fireman's Park Verona, WI

Nestled along the shores of a reclaimed quarry site, Fireman's Park provided the City of Verona with a unique public space for outdoor recreation for decades. The city partnered with CRS and MSA Professional Services to develop an entirely new recreational vision for Fireman's Park that reflected community desires and citizen input. The comprehensive facility now features a 3,600 square-foot interactive Vortex® Splashpad, a 3,100 square-foot playground, new park shelter, beach improvements, shade structures, site amenities, safety surfacing, turf, basketball hoops, kiosk and more!







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Anyone can play! **Disc golf** is soaring in popularity as friends and family look outdoors to stay active and enjoy some competitive fun or just a good time. CRS can create a disc golf course that's perfect for your location and budget — **from Par 3 to Championship-level courses**. If you have unused green space, disc golf may be the perfect addition to your venue.



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Engage the whole community with a **Splashpad®**. These zero-depth aquatic play areas combine the sensation of different water effects - flowing, misting, and jetting — with colorful, interactive features. Splashpads offer a **unique aquatic experience plus endless hours of fun** delighting children and their families all summer long.

# Solving Recreational Challenges

CRS is here to provide you with solutions to your recreation needs — from start to finish. Call **877-896-8442** or visit **[crs4rec.com](http://crs4rec.com)**

In addition to providing all of the recreational equipment, CRS provided installation service and start-up training for the Vortex Splashpad. City of Verona Recreation Director Casey Dudley states,

**“Working with CRS was a great experience. Ron [President of CRS] was an integral part of this project and helped make it an absolutely wonderful park.”**

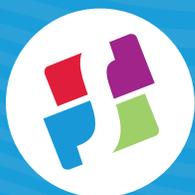
The Fireman's Park upgrades have brought a totally new aquatic experience to the Verona community that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy for years to come.



To learn more about this, and other CRS projects, visit **[crs4rec.com/projects](http://crs4rec.com/projects)**

**“CRS designed the Splashpad,  
playground, and shade features to  
meet our vision and budget.”**

- Jason Craft, Alexander Park in Cold Spring, MN



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# REGISTER TODAY

## for the 2022 NDRPA State Conference

Don't miss NDRPA's premier annual event, the NDRPA State Conference! This year's event will be held in Minot Sept. 13-15. Join North Dakota park and recreation professionals from across the state for educational sessions, fun networking opportunities, and a look into the best of Minot's parks and recreation scene.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**"I So Declare It!" – Theodore Roosevelt's Conservation Crusade for America – Theodore Roosevelt as portrayed by Kurt Skinner**

Kurt Skinner, Colorado-based historian and Theodore Roosevelt historical performer, takes audiences back to a time

when Theodore Roosevelt embodied all the promise of the new American century. Roosevelt imprinted his love of the natural world onto America – as our "wilderness warrior" president. He redefined the executive branch of government as he fought tirelessly for our natural treasures and left a legacy of federal resource conservation and wildlife protection. Skinner captures the vigor, energy and enthusiasm of the Spanish-American War hero that became America's youngest president.



**Synchronicity: Connecting Your Team for Optimal Results – Shannon McKain**

Shannon McKain is a motivational speaker and workplace culture consultant from Texas with an expertise in emotional intelligence, communication and generational differences in the workforce. She assists companies

and employees to create dramatic mindset shifts that help drive positive culture transformations within an organization. A former executive recruiter, Pryor Leadership Fellow, NFL cheerleader, and now keynote speaker for more than a decade, McKain has entertained and educated audiences around the world, receiving several accolades and awards throughout her career. She has keynoted and consulted for major corporations, associations and parks and recreation events, including Garmin, GE Transportation, Tesla, Rubbermaid, MIT, National Parks and Recreation Directors, and many more.

### TUESDAY KICK-OFF

Following registration and lunch at the Souris Valley Golf Course, the conference kicks off strong with several options for fun afternoon activities around Minot.

- Join a golf outing at the sprawling Souris Valley Golf Course, with a scenic backdrop and the idyllic Souris River winding through the course.
- Visit the beautiful Roosevelt Park Zoo, the oldest zoo in North Dakota and home to a variety of animals

from lemurs to red pandas to reindeer, tucked amid beautiful landscapes and educational features.

- The Downtown History and Spirits Walk features a stroll through historic downtown Minot once known as "Little Chicago." While learning about Minot's history, stop to enjoy spirits and street art along the way.

After these activities, relax at Tuesday night's social and dinner at The Alley in downtown Minot.

### SESSIONS & MORE

The Clarion Hotel Convention Center hosts the conference exhibit hall, educational sessions, awards banquet, and NDRPA annual meeting. Wednesday and Thursday's breakout session topics include team building, recruitment and retention, North Dakota open record and meeting laws, safety in sports, fundraising and partnerships, and more!

### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SMALL PARK BOARDS

NDRPA is pleased to announce five conference registration scholarships are available to park board commissioners or staff from park districts that have up to two full-time, year-round staff. The scholarship is limited to two people per park district and distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. If a park district submits more than two scholarship requests, additional requests will be placed on a waiting list to be awarded after Aug. 19. To request a scholarship, contact the NDRPA office at 701-355-4458 or ndrpaoffice@gmail.com.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Registration:** Register online at [www.ndrpa.com](http://www.ndrpa.com). If your agency wishes to register a large group at one time, you may submit the group registration form found on the website. The deadline is Aug. 26.

**Accommodations:** Call the Clarion Hotel Convention Center at 701-852-2504 to make a reservation. The deadline is Aug. 22.

**Raffle/Silent Auction Items:** Each park district is encouraged to bring at least one item valued at \$50 or more to raise funds for scholarships during the raffle/silent auction.



# SCHEDULE of events



MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA · SEPTEMBER 13-15, 2022

## TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 - Multiple Sites

8:00 AM EXHIBITOR BOOTH SETUP

11:00 AM LUNCH & ATTENDEE REGISTRATION

Souris Valley Golf Course

12:00 PM GOLF OUTING

Souris Valley Golf Course

1:00 PM ROOSEVELT PARK ZOO TOUR

1:00 PM DOWNTOWN MINOT HISTORY & SPIRIT WALK

5:30 PM SOCIAL & DINNER - THE ALLEY

## WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 - Clarion Hotel

7:00 AM ATTENDEE REGISTRATION

Exhibit Hall & Raffle/Silent Auction Open

Breakfast & Past Presidents Breakfast

8:00 AM CONFERENCE WELCOME - RON MERRITT

8:15 AM KEYNOTE

**"I So Declare It!" - Theodore Roosevelt's Conservation Crusade for America - Theodore Roosevelt as portrayed by Kurt Skinner**

T.R. imprinted his love of the natural world onto America - as our "wilderness warrior" president, he redefined the executive branch of government as he fought tirelessly for our natural treasures and left a legacy of federal resource conservation and wildlife protection.

9:15 AM GENERAL SESSION

**"Thriving Through Lifes Journey" - Terry Eckman**

Embrace your daily tasks, opportunities and challenges with a perspective that can enhance your personal and professional life. Survive the ups and downs with tools and strategies that can help you make the most of every day. Recognize the power of a positive attitude.

Explore the power of simple choices to maximize your life journey. This session is "you time!" A humorous and thoughtful presentation filled with research-based practices.

10:00 AM BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS

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**do what you can  
with what you have  
WHERE YOU ARE.**  
*Theodore Roosevelt*

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# WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 - Clarion Hotel

## 10:30 AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **Prairie Grit – Krystal Butgereit**

Prairie Grit Adaptive Sports is a nonprofit organization with the mission of providing sports opportunities for youth and adults living with physical and mental disabilities to enhance their quality of life. Our goal is to create opportunities for youth, adults and their families through adaptive sports. They level the playing field by removing barriers in order to give everyone opportunities to do what they love. Prairie Grit offers a variety of activities and events year-round.

### **Teddy Roosevelt “Parks & Rec” Team Trivia – Kurt Skinner**

Hosted by Teddy Roosevelt, our “parks and rec” president. T.R. federally protected over 230 million acres of public lands and cherished outdoor recreation. Join with your friends at this fun and engaging Teddy Roosevelt-themed trivia event and test your knowledge of his outdoor life and legacy.

### **North Dakota Open Records and Open Meetings – Annique Lockhard**

This presentation will provide an overview of the open record and meeting laws found in North Dakota Century Code Chapter 44-04. The first part of the presentation identifies and explains key definitions relating to the open records and meeting laws. The second part is intended to instill confidence in properly responding to open record requests, posting appropriate meeting notices and handling executive sessions. The final part of the presentation identifies common open records and meeting violations and explains the Office of Attorney General’s review process of alleged violations.

## 11:30 AM LUNCH

## 12:30 PM ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

This session will feature roundtable discussions on a variety of topics. There will be five tables which will each feature a different topic: marketing, trails, facilities, operations, and aquatics. Each table has sub-topics to choose from with discussions lasting 15 minutes. After each segment attendees will be able to rotate to another topic of interest or stay at the same table.

## 1:30 PM FINAL BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS

## 2:00PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **Fundraising – Thor Nelson**

Thor Nelson is a lifelong resident of the Magic City. He started officiating USA Hockey in 1990 and was hired to officiate in the NHL in 1994. Thor officiated over 1,000 NHL games and officiated at both the Winter Olympics in Italy (2006) and Canada (2010). He is now the president of Magic City Fast Pitch Inc. and serves as vice president for USA Softball of North Dakota Junior Olympic Fastpitch. He played an integral part of the fundraising efforts for the new South Hill Softball Complex in Minot. Thor will discuss his fundraising efforts and the importance of being a vital partner to Minot Park District.

### **Keep Your Employees Safe: Self-Awareness & Defense – Dan Merc**

The most important thing to learn regarding self-defense is to prevent an attack from occurring before it starts. Attendees will learn methods of physical awareness and verbal presentation that will improve their ability to prevent an attack.

### **Safe Community – Detective Robbie Sumlin**

This session will cover the importance of having a good relationship with your local police department and being aware of how you can keep your parks safe. Detective Sumlin will share his knowledge of crime patterns and signs to look out for in your own parks and communities.

## 3:15 PM FACILITY TOUR

## 6:30 PM SOCIAL

## 7:00 PM AWARDS BANQUET

# THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 - Clarion Hotel

7:30 AM BREAKFAST & NDRPA ANNUAL MEETING

8:30 AM CLOSING KEYNOTE

## Synchronicity Connecting Your Team for Optimal Results - Shannon McKain

Today, we have a plethora of artificial intelligence, data and analytics yet still feel phenomenally disconnected in the workplace. Let's create better interoffice relationships where each team member feels supported, encouraged and valued, where it's more likely that interoffice relationships will improve, customer connections will grow stronger, and your team's productivity and performance will reach new heights.

9:45 AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

## Safe Sports - Dr. Dawn Mattern

This session will offer discussion of guidelines and recommendations for keeping sports participants safe while playing. This presentation will also cover the evaluation, treatment and triage of the acute injury based on the individual's condition.

## Leadership Building Blocks, What Kind of Leader are You? - Shannon McKain

Sharing both her successes and failures including living on a canoe for two weeks (studying Situational Leadership), Shannon integrates how Four Pillars of Leadership can make or break any team and includes fun interactive communication exercises!

## 1,000 Trees for Minot - Tim Bauman

1,000 Trees for Minot aims to advance community development, improve quality of life, strengthen biodiversity, maintain air quality, create windbreaks and shelters, and educate the public through the goal of planting 1,000 trees in Minot by 2026.

11:00 AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS

## Title VI Training - Char Langehaug

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities of any entity that receive federal assistance. This presentation will discuss the Title VI program and how it applies to the Recreational Trails Program.

## Cyber Security - Greg Larson, Pro IT

How protected is your organization against cyber threats? Learn the dos and don'ts to protect you and your organization.

## Recruitment And Retention - Shannon McKain

Explore the intricacies of recruiting and retaining parks and recreation staff. We've all heard about generational differences, the Great Resignation and labor shortages, but how can you deliver an exceptional workplace to recruit and retain the best staff. This session covers the latest recruitment practices, best practices for employee retention and how to reimagine the workplace for success.

12:00 PM GRAB AND GO LUNCHES



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## Golden Egg Award

The Golden Egg Award recognizes outstanding and innovative park projects in North Dakota. It was established in honor of former Fargo Park District Superintendent Bob “Goose” Johnson and presented to an agency that manages an innovative park or facility that serves as a model facility or park in its inclusiveness and responsiveness to the needs of the local community or region.

Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) is the 2021 recipient of the Golden Egg Award for



its Cottonwood Park expansion. The project was successful because of the many partners that came together to address the need for additional softball fields in Bismarck.

Softball is big in Bismarck, with the youth and adult programs having the highest participation numbers in the state. Teams were turned away in the men’s

and women’s leagues due to capacity and scheduling conflicts. Fastpitch teams did not have a “home” of their own for practices and/or games. All programs needed additional fields.

In 2018, community volunteers formed the “Breaking New Ground” committee to expand Cottonwood Park. The Bismarck Men’s Slowpitch Softball Association, Bismarck Women’s Slowpitch Softball Association and the Bismarck Youth Fastpitch Softball Association were key supporters, along with BPRD.

Ground was broken in April 2019 to add four additional adult softball fields, a four-field youth fastpitch complex with covered dugouts, scoreboards, press box, and grandstand, two lighted fields, a concessions/restroom building, a ticketing booth, additional parking, and green space for warm-up and practice.

Additional amenities include recreational trail connections, two playgrounds, two picnic shelters, natural areas, trees, and shrubs. BPRD also partnered with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to irrigate the park expansion area using river water, thus saving the park district approximately \$200,000 per year in city water fees. This \$4.3 million project was made possible with 119 donors contributing 45% of the total cost.

The 230-acre Cottonwood Complex also is full of other activity and play options. A trail winds through the park and connects with the greater Bismarck trail system. The complex includes an urban fishing pond, a BMX motocross racing track, and the Aaron Haaland



Memorial Baseball Field complete with field lights, a batting cage, press box, ticket booth, and scoreboard.

Soccer is played at Reichert Field, as well as in the large green space at the north end of the park, which can be configured with up to 14 soccer fields. Lacrosse and bocce players also enjoy competing on the green space.

Play on the new softball fields began in 2021, and the complex hosted a number of tournaments, including the Junior Olympics girls’ fastpitch state tournament in July 2021. Cottonwood Park also is home to the Bismarck Marathon, which also benefited from the expansion.

Congratulations to BPRD on receiving the 2021 Golden Egg Award for its Cottonwood Park Expansion project!



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## Citizen Advocacy Award

The NDRPA Citizen Advocacy Award recognizes a citizen, elected or appointed official, or volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding contribution to the park, recreation and conservation movement through education and activating the public in their community or state or at the national level. The recipients of the 2021 awards are Dr. Steve Chuppe of Bismarck and Rep. Mike Lefor of Dickinson.



### Dr. Steve Chuppe

Dr. Steve Chuppe opened Chuppe Chiropractic Clinic with his brother in 1988. They eventually expanded services to include physical therapy and renamed the business Chuppe Health.

Chuppe's love of baseball – and all things recreation and community-oriented – inspired him to co-chair the effort to raise funds for the renovation of Bismarck Municipal Ballpark. For 15 months, Chuppe and co-chair, the late Al Bortke, worked with a tenacious group of baseball enthusiasts and Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) staff to raise just less than \$1.3 million.

Chuppe's leadership and work with the community-minded team helped create a "new" Bismarck Municipal Ballpark, with a grandstand, stadium seats, ticket booth, press box, concessions, and restrooms. Their efforts have made the entire ballpark experience better for the players, community and visitors. His leadership in beautifying the ballpark and surrounding grounds, including tree plantings and landscaping, will leave a legacy in Bismarck.

In 2017, because of Chuppe's interest in sports, coaching and youth fastpitch, BPRD once again called upon him to work with another set of volunteers and another co-chair, Mike Wolf, to lead a campaign to add eight more softball fields to Cottonwood Park: four fields for adults and a four-field complex for youth fastpitch.

Chuppe enjoys serving his community. He has coached for several organizations, including BPRD and Century High School. He has been a United Way volunteer for more than 20 years and served as president in 2014. He has served on the Bismarck State College Alumni Association board of directors; been involved extensively with Bismarck Baseball Boosters and served as president; and is a member of the ski patrol.

Congratulations to Dr. Chuppe on receiving the 2021 NDRPA Citizen Advocacy Award!



### Representative Mike Lefor

Rep. Mike Lefor has been actively engaged in promoting parks and recreation in the community of Dickinson for more than 35 years. He has experienced numerous facets of parks and recreation, from participating in volleyball, basketball, golf, and softball leagues to officiating these same leagues – usually taking on the most competitive top leagues.

Lefor always has enjoyed the competitive camaraderie and social aspects that comes with adult recreational programs. He has served on user group committees and volunteers to work special events and tournaments. Lefor served more than 20 years as a Dickinson Park Board commissioner, the last eight as president. He was well known within the park district staff as a commissioner who cared about the employees and tried to always improve the work environment by individually getting to know them.

Lefor's father, Bob, led the charge for the Dickinson Park District to take over ownership of Heart River Golf Course in the 1980s, and Lefor held the same passion for the golf course. He singlehandedly championed efforts to raise more than \$1 million dollars to replace the outdated irrigation system in 2008. Lefor always had the park board focused on improving the quality of life within the community, while letting employees retain ownership and stay focused on day-to-day operations. Lefor was a vital part of the Recreation Building Authority and helped guide the construction and expansion of the West River Community Center and the West River Ice Center.

Although Lefor's passion was parks and recreation, he also was committed to enhancing other community components. He served as the chair of the CHI-St. Alexius Hospital Board, was involved with the Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau, and always worked hard to keep Dickinson State University at the forefront of higher education in North Dakota.

Lefor owns Blue 42 Grille and Bar and Green 19 Grill and Lounge and continues to support parks and recreation programs and events with his generosity through donations and sponsorships. He also has served in the North Dakota House of Representatives since 2015. His legislative history has always shown a strong, supportive effort for parks and recreation through his voting record, testimony and engaging with NDRPA during legislative sessions.

Lefor's dedication and support to parks and recreation has had a great impact on the Dickinson community. Congratulations to Rep. Lefor on receiving the award!

# PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

The Fargo Park District reports the following personnel moves:

**Elli Agather** has been hired as human resources generalist. She grew up in Fargo and attended North Dakota State University (NDSU). Her hobbies include reading, walking her dogs and spending time with family.

**Eli Kollman** has been hired as second golf assistant at Rose Creek Golf Course. Eli is from Casselton, N.D., and his hobbies are golf, hunting and fishing.

**Nick Pearson** will work for the district in sports turf maintenance. A native of Moorhead, Minn., Pearson enjoys fishing, baseball and stickball.

**Wesley Roers** will work for the district in park maintenance. Roers is from Moorhead, Minn., and his hobbies are golf, playing guitar, hiking, photography, kayaking, and motorcycling.

**Anindita Nag** has joined the district as operations administrative assistant. She is from Jalpaiguri, India, and attended school at NDSU. Her hobbies are photography, traveling, reading, and cooking.

**Kelly Kuntz** is the district marketing and communications specialist with a focus on community input projects and providing support to the Foundation and to the Fargo Parks Sports Complex. Kuntz is from East Grand Forks, Minn., and attended school at Bemidji State and St. Cloud State. Her hobbies include plants, softball, volleyball, staying active, and going to the lake.

**Tyler Gortmaker** joins the district as a mechanic. A native of Walcott, N.D., Gortmaker enjoys riding motorcycles. He is married and has three goats.

**Alexis Swenson** is a district Foundation administrative assistant who grew up in Moorhead, Minn., and attended St. Olaf College. Following graduation, she taught English in Nagasaki, Japan, for three years. Her hobbies include studying Japanese, digital photography, hiking, and spending time with her golden retriever.

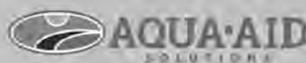
**Pace Maier**, a native of St. Peter, Minn., is the district's new events supervisor after serving previously in the marketing department.



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