

FOCUS

The Official Publication of the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association

Spring 2024



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all! I hope everyone enjoyed the eclipse a few weeks ago. I am not sure how much of it anyone was able to see unless you went south. If so, I hope it was everything it was made out to be.

Now that the ice rinks are closed and winter programs are complete, it is time for the excitement of opening golf courses, baseball and softball fields, and registrations for our summer programs. It is a busy time for all of us, but one I feel we all look forward to and enjoy. We need to remember to give a big THANK YOU to all the hard-working staff that help people register and prepare the golf courses and ball diamonds for use. Without these dedicated staff members on our teams, it would be hard to get people outside and involved in our programs. It is also an exciting time for staff as they start interviewing young people for jobs that help all of us keep facilities and programs going.

I remember my first job with the Bismarck Parks and Recreation District. It was working at the Schaumberg Ice Arena as an ice monitor. Since I played hockey, I thought it was the best job to have. When summer rolled around, I worked in the park operations side of the district, trimming grass around trees in the parks. That summer job helped me realize that parks and recreation districts have more to offer a city than just facilities and programs. I realized they also took care of the parks and the

ball fields and had many other duties that kept people recreating.

I have had many different job opportunities throughout my time here with the Bismarck Parks and Recreation District, and I see the staff we are hiring today as the next generation of parks and recreation leaders throughout the state. We should try to have our staff tell their stories of how and why they got into the parks and recreation profession. We need to work at keeping the young staff engaged and make sure they feel that whatever job they are doing is important to the success of our districts. We need to make sure they will want to keep working year after year in seasonal positions, and maybe someday, they will be a specialist, supervisor, manager, or even a director in one of our districts.

Good luck to everyone as we head into the busy summer season. Enjoy the weather and the activities outside, and don't forget the upcoming 2024 NDRPA State Conference Sept. 10-12 in Watford City.

Mike Wald, NDRPA President



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JULY 15
FOCUS Deadline

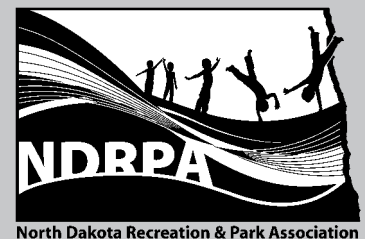
SEPT. 10
Playground Maintenance Course,
Watford City

SEPT. 10-12
NDRPA State Conference –
50th Anniversary,
Watford City

OCT. 8-10
NRPA Conference, Atlanta, Ga.

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.

Next *FOCUS* deadline: July 15, 2024

Cover photo: Flag football at McKenzie County Athletic Park in Watford City. Watford City Parks and Recreation District

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NDRPA Seeks Hall of Fame Nominees

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 the NDRPA shall be a high consideration.

Hall of Fame recipients will be announced and recognized at the NDRPA Annual Awards Banquet on Sept. 11 in Watford City. The recipient will receive a plaque, and another plaque will be displayed at the North Dakota Sports Hall of Fame in Jamestown.

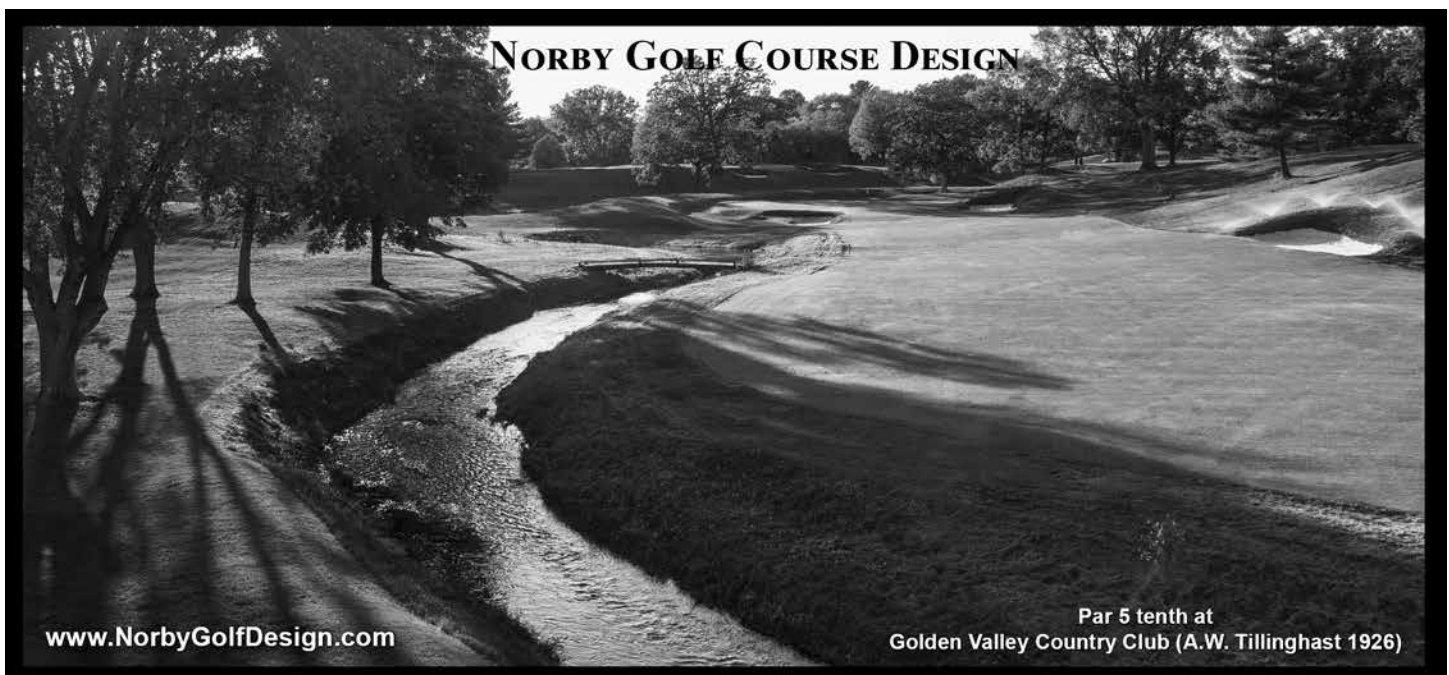
Nomination forms are available on the NDRPA website at www.ndrpa.com. The nomination deadline is July 15.

Nominations Needed for 2024 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.

Consider nominating individuals or organizations in your communities for the following awards: Distinguished Professional Award, Outstanding Young Professional, Citizen Advocacy Award, Partnership Award, Golden Egg Award, Innovative Programming Award, and Impact Award.

Visit the NDRPA website at www.ndrpa.com to download the nomination form. The deadline to submit nominations for awards is July 15.



Sneak Peek into the 2024 NDRPA State Conference

It's time to gear up for the premier gathering of North Dakota parks and recreation professionals at the 50th NDRPA State Conference Sept. 10-12 in Watford City. Join us for an unforgettable experience that promises to inspire the way you think, connect and innovate.

What to Expect

Picture this: an atmosphere pulsating with energy, where leaders, visionaries and pioneers converge under one roof. This conference isn't just about networking and exchanging business cards, it's a platform for forging meaningful connections, sparking insightful conversations and inspiring new ideas.

Education Topics

Curious about what awaits you? Here's a sneak peek at some topics that will be explored:

1. **Maximizing events:** Whether it's a community event, a seasonal attraction, or an annual tournament; learn and converse with some of the best across the state as we find ways to inspire, validate and provide memorable experiences to our guests.
2. **Hands-on learning:** Learn about all the factors associated with artificial turf. With that, our "hands-on learners" will have the opportunity to gain valuable experience going on the turf and learning some important practices.
3. **Well-being:** In our service to our communities, we sometimes forget about ourselves. We want to make sure that everyone's well-being is at the forefront of our day to day. You'll leave inspired and ready to fulfill your passion.
4. **Revenue Streams:** Creative ideas and dreaming big are an incredible perk in many of our jobs, but to do that we must have the funding. From recruiting more attendees, utilizing foundations or exploring grants, there will be an option for you to gain insightful and practical knowledge.



Why Attend?

Still on the fence? Here are just a few more reasons why you won't want to miss out:

- **Networking Opportunities:** Rub shoulders with leaders, experts and fellow professionals from across the state. Forge connections that will propel you professionally and assist in taking our respective park districts to new heights.
- **Knowledge Expansion:** Expand your horizons and deepen your understanding of the latest trends and strategies driving the parks and recreation field.
- **Inspiration Galore:** Get inspired by the stories of resilience, innovation and success shared by our esteemed speakers. Leave feeling empowered to take on new challenges and pursue your passions with renewed vigor.

Stay Tuned

Stay tuned this summer as we unveil the full lineup of speakers, sessions and activities.

Save the Date

- Are you ready to be a part of something extraordinary? We'll see you September 10-12 in Watford City as we celebrate 50 years of the NDRPA annual state conference! We can all be Park and Rec Proud!

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Tonia Dosch – Rugby Park Board Commissioner



Tonia Dosch, Rugby real estate appraiser, first became interested in a position on the town's park board while volunteering with the local Jaycees chapter raising money for a new park. Being the park was located on park board land, Dosch worked closely with members of the board.

"Shortly after the project was completed, there was an opening on the park board. A current member suggested I run for the position and the rest is history. I have been on the board since June 2016," Dosch said.

In that time, Dosch learned how parks and recreation is managed in the rural community in north-central North Dakota. In Rugby, the park district maintains and runs parks, walking paths and the fairgrounds, while the city of Rugby runs recreation programs.

"My number one goal is communication and maintaining the budget without having to petition for additional mills," Dosch said. "Being able to communicate what is happening 'behind the scenes' at the meetings to what is happening in the public's eyes. I love to hear ideas that community members have for the improvements of our parks. After all, it

is not just the board's parks; it is the community's parks.

"One of the major challenges is maintaining a balanced budget, while not seeking additional funding (adding mills to taxes)," Dosch explained. "RPD has a unique situation where we have four parks, an outdoor ice rink area, walking path, and fairgrounds which we maintain and improve. This is a lot for a community of 2,900 people, but all are staple attractions to the city of Rugby."

Rugby's oldest park is Ellery Park, which is known for its weekly Lions/RPD Music in the Park during the summer. A new pavilion built five years ago hosts a variety of events, including music in the park, an outdoor movie, weddings, picnics, bridal showers, and more.

The community's newest park is Jaycees Park, which was built in 2010. Since the initial development, upgrades have included additional swings, a large picnic shelter, bathrooms, zip line, and, very soon, a new splash pad. Jaycees Park is located along the four-mile walking path that is maintained for year-round use.

Dosch is excited about another cooperative project with the Jaycees, a splash pad scheduled to open this summer. "We have been working on this project for a couple years, securing the funding, picking



COMMISSIONER'S CORNER *continued...*

out the features and working with the Health Department," Dosch said. "This will be a great state-of-the-art splash pad with many features for all ages to enjoy. We are very excited to bring this attraction to the city of Rugby."

Five years ago, the district brought back an outdoor ice rink, which was well-received. Other needed projects followed. "There have been some learning curves to go along with it, but (the rink) is a great source of recreation during the winter months," Dosch noted. "Anytime we are able to do some updating to any of our properties is great."

Additional upgrades made during Dosch's time on the board: the pavilion at Ellery, heating/cooling for the Community Building at the Fairgrounds, maintaining the walking path, and new bathrooms at Southside Park.

Dosch, Tyler (her husband of 18 years) and three daughters love to be out and about and on the go. The girls are busy with basketball, golf, softball, dance, and gymnastics, and Dosch and her husband are their biggest fans and love to follow their activities. As a family, they enjoy fishing (boat and ice), Ranger (Polaris) rides, golfing, deer hunting, and lake time.


Dosch has owned her own appraisal company covering an eight-county region since 2006.

Dosch said the Rugby Park Board recently joined the NDRPA and she is looking forward to the relationship with other park districts that comes



from membership. "I am very interested in finding out more about the association and what it does for its members. It could be very beneficial for RPD to join and reap the benefits NDRPA has to offer," she said.






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Dickinson's Heroes Park Undergoes Enhancements

On March 14, Heroes Park opened, marking a significant milestone for Dickinson Parks and Recreation as it introduced two pioneering features: the first-ever toddler park and an artificial turf surface. This addition breathes new life into the former "Leisure Park," enhancing its amenities with the inclusion of benches and a pavilion complete with two picnic tables alongside the toddler playground.

Situated adjacent to soccer fields, the park was already one of the busiest playgrounds in the district, and with the onset of spring, its popularity has soared. This \$135,000 project was made possible through generous contributions from the city of Dickinson, Dickinson Police Department, Dickinson Fire Department, and CHI St. Alexius.



Bloomfest: Indoor Winter Garden and Tea Parties



The Grand Forks Park District introduced Bloomfest, an indoor winter garden event, to the Grand Forks community in late February 2024. The special two-week event was free and open to the public and showcased more than 11,000 tulips, hyacinths and daffodils at the Lincoln Golf Course Clubhouse. In addition to the public open house, Bloomfest hosted two family-friendly fairy garden tea parties for a small fee on weekends.

Tickets were offered for each event, and both tea parties were sold out within a few days. Attendees enjoyed live music and took part in various activities while taking in all the beautiful sights and smells of

the indoor garden. Kids of all ages enjoyed lemonade and cookies, as well as fairy themed crafts, coloring and dressing up as fairies and gnomes.

Bloomfest was the brainchild of the Grand Forks Park District's wonderful horticulture department. The flower bulbs featured at Bloomfest were generously donated to the Grand Forks Park District by the local Lowe's Home Improvement store, and the Grand Forks Horticultural Society volunteered its time to assist the Grand Forks Park District's horticulture team in planting thousands of bulbs for the event. All the flowers featured at the indoor garden are to be planted at University Park later this spring.

Overall, the Grand Forks Park District was thrilled by the success of Bloomfest and is excited to expand the event in 2025 in hopes to share the unique winter garden experience with even more of the community.





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VFW Sports Center Expansion Celebrated Feb. 28

Bismarck Parks and Recreation District (BPRD) celebrated the expanded and renovated VFW Sports Center with its partners, campaign supporters and the community at a Feb. 28 event. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held with partners and Raise the Rink Capital Campaign supporters, who contributed \$6.2 million toward the \$16.6 million project.

Following the ceremony, the facility was open for self-guided tours, and many people enjoyed the free open skating in First International Bank & Trust Arena, the new third sheet of ice.

Other facility enhancements include the renovated Rink #2, now H.A. Thompson & Sons Arena; a new second lobby and concession area; additional larger locker rooms for the entire facility; new multipurpose space for training, meetings and parties; new rooms for sports medicine and officials; additional restrooms; new office and storage space; and more parking.

Built in 1986, Rink #1 opened in the VFW All Seasons Arena. It remains Bismarck's premier hockey competition rink with almost 1,300 seats and is home to the Bismarck Bobcats junior hockey team, along with high school and youth hockey and figure skating. The curling rink opened the same year.



Rink #2, with seating for 305, was added to the facility in 1999, along with ice and golf enhancements. The facility was renamed the VFW Sports Center.

The VFW Sports Center is part of the greater Tom O'Leary Complex, which includes the Tom O'Leary Tennis Courts, Tom O'Leary Golf Course, Sam McQuade Sr. Softball Complex, Municipal Country Club, Bismarck Rotary Arboretum, and 2.4-mile multi-use trail.



Fargo Parks Sports Center Grand Opening May 29

The longtime vision for Fargo's own destination indoor sporting, event and activity facility will soon be realized with Phase I of the Fargo Parks Sports Center slated to open to the public on June 3.

The multipurpose community recreation facility will accommodate nearly any indoor sport, activity, tournament, or special event and will span more than 390,000 square feet of indoor space.

Located in south Fargo, the Fargo Parks Sports Center will address a critically unmet community need for indoor recreation facilities to serve Fargo and the surrounding region. Phase I of the Sports Center will include one full-size turf field, an elevated walking track, four hardwood courts, multiple community and meeting rooms, food and beverage services, Sanford Sports Performance facilities, and Fargo Park District staff offices.

While athletes will benefit greatly from the space, the Fargo Parks Sports Center is expected to be a destination facility for all recreational and community activities. In addition to standard athletic events, the forward-thinking design will cater to a wide range of activities including art, drama, educational classes, e-sports, horseshoes, drone racing, and more.

The impact of the Fargo Parks Sports Center goes far beyond sports and recreation. The space will serve more than 20,000 local children, provide gathering space for 20-plus local community organizations and attract more than 1 million local and regional visitors annually. A facility of this magnitude will have an incredible economic impact on the community by generating revenue, boosting local business, creating jobs, and increasing the overall quality of life for residents of Fargo and the surrounding communities.

With 40-plus tournaments scheduled annually, the Fargo Parks Sports Center will draw tens of thousands of visitors from outside the community year after year. A comprehensive study done in collaboration with the Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitor Bureau estimates the Sports Center will generate more than \$6.6 million in direct visitor spending through accommodations, dining, shopping, and entertainment, injecting a significant amount of revenue into the local economy.



Transition Schedule

The Fargo Parks Sports Center will officially open to the public on June 3, but Fargo Park District staff will begin to transition their work to the facility starting May 1. During the transition, please be aware of the following dates:

- May 1: All Fargo Park District business will now take place at the Fargo Parks Sports Center (6100 38th St. S.).
- May 29: Public grand opening party at the Fargo Parks Sports Center from 4:00-7:00 p.m. CT.
- June 3: Fargo Parks Sports Center is open to the public for general use.

The Fargo Park District is thrilled to welcome the community to this game-changing space in just a few short weeks and give a special thanks to its community and partners for their unwavering support in this community project.

Minot Parks Begins Registration for Spring and Summer Recreation Programs

As the warm weather approaches, Minot Parks invites families to register their children for youth recreation programs designed to foster athleticism, creativity, and sportsmanship. From T-ball and baseball to art, fitness gym, and track meets, there's something for every child to enjoy.

T-Ball, Baseball, Softball, Art, and Fitness Gym: Beginning the week of June 10, these programs provide a fantastic opportunity for children to develop their skills, make new friends and stay active throughout the summer months. There is a one-time fee of \$15 for participation in T-ball, baseball and softball, making these programs accessible to all families. The deadline to register for T-ball, baseball and softball is May 10 and May 31 for the art and fitness gym. Parents can register their children at minotparks.com.

Spring Track Program: For girls and boys in grades 3 through 6, Minot Parks presents the Spring Track Program. Scheduled to take place on May 6, 13, and 20 at 6:30 p.m. at Duane Carlson Stadium, this program offers an opportunity for young athletes to showcase their speed in running events. Participants will compete against their peers in a supportive and encouraging environment. There is no pre-registration.

Summer Olympics: Calling all young athletes ages 6 to 14! Minot Parks is hosting the Summer Olympics, a track meet featuring running, jumping and throwing events on June 6, 13, 18, and 25, at 6



p.m. at Duane Carlson Stadium. Children will have the chance to demonstrate their skills and compete for ribbons in their respective age groups. Best of all, this program is free of charge, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to participate and shine. There is no pre-registration.

"We're excited to offer these engaging and enriching opportunities for children in our community," Minot Parks Executive Director Elly DesLauriers said. "Our youth recreation programs promote physical activity, skill development, and teamwork, while fostering a love for sports and creativity."

The Minot Park District strives to provide access to programs and facilities that promote a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle to all Minot citizens, regardless of income level. To achieve this goal, the Minot Park District offers youth program scholarships to those in need of financial assistance. Please call 701-857-4136 for more information.

A collage of images and text celebrating the 20th anniversary of the West River Community Center. It features a large "20th Anniversary" graphic, a photo of a climbing wall, and a newspaper clipping titled "Community Center set to open mid-May" by Alan Reed. The clipping includes quotes from the city manager and the center's director. The date "MAY 18, 2024" and location "WEST RIVER COMMUNITY CENTER | 2004 FAIRWAY ST, DICKINSON, ND" are also visible.

Dickinson Celebrating West River Community Center 20th Anniversary

The Dickinson Parks and Recreation Department is inviting everyone to join in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the opening of the West River Community Center in Dickinson.

The May 18 event will celebrate the facility's past two decades and what it has meant to the city of Dickinson and southwest North Dakota. Visit dickinsonparks.org for details.

NDRPA Awards Highlight – Innovative Programming Award

Through its annual awards program, the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association (NDRPA) recognizes member individuals and organizations who, in the past year, went above and beyond to deliver exceptional programming to the public. Awards were presented at the state conference in September in Grand Forks.

The **Innovative Programming Award** recognizes and honors an NDRPA member agency or organization that demonstrates leadership with advanced groundbreaking ideas in programming. The award highlights the efforts and impact an agency or organization has made in promoting or increasing awareness of the benefits of parks and recreation in their community through offering a variety of programs.

The 2023 recipient is the West Fargo Park District's SAIL Program. Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) is a fitness-based program for adults aged 55 and older. After a growing number of program participants expressed interest in more cardio-type workouts, Recreation Manager Lance Belisle and Recreation Specialist Allison Hauschild discovered SAIL through a foundational research study that was published in the Journal of Gerontology in 2007. The fall-prevention program is based on exercises that improve strength, balance, flexibility, and fitness. They are the most important activity adults can do to stay active and reduce their chances of falling, if done regularly.

The district gave Belisle and Hauschild the approval to enroll in online training to become certified SAIL Trainers. Hauschild became the first leader of the program and continues to train peer leaders and supervise the program. During COVID 19, Hauschild recorded and presented classes online.

The free one-hour SAIL classes led by peer volunteers are offered three times a week. A typical West Fargo Park District SAIL class consists of a three- to five-minute warm-up; 18 to 20 minutes of aerobics; 10 minutes of balance; 15 to 18 minutes of strength training; and eight to 10 minutes of stretching. At the end of each SAIL session, the group leader provides a daily health tip.

The SAIL program has grown steadily from 21 participants in the first class in 2018 to between 80 and 100 participants in 2023. The class is held in the Rustad indoor turf room three days a week from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Participants can join anytime.

SAIL Program success has created other spin-



**Allison Hauschild and Lance Belisle,
West Fargo Park District**

off programs and events like monthly Coffee Day gatherings and holiday, birthdays and other milestone celebration events. The park district also has hosted informational speakers through SAIL, addressing topics relating to health, wellness, travel, and more. Other community health and wellness partners have provided free physical health assessments after the sessions.

NDRPA Awards Highlight – Partnership Award

Through its annual awards program, the North Dakota Recreation and Park Association recognizes member individuals and organizations who in the past year went above and beyond to deliver exceptional programming to the public. Awards were presented at the state conference in September in Grand Forks.

The **Partnership Award** honoring a successful partnership to create a project or program that benefits the community, region, or state is given to the city of Bismarck and Bismarck Public School District for the Local Food Program. The program aims to increase the number of schools and farmers involved in the Farm-to-School Program; grow and expand community gardens, community orchard, BisMarket, and other farmers markets; and increase access to healthy local foods for all community members, with a focus on those who are underserved and most vulnerable.

For several years, the promotion of local foods for the health and wellness of Bismarck has benefitted from a partnership between Bismarck Parks and Recreation District, Bismarck Public School District and the city of Bismarck. In 2019, these agencies joined forces to create and fund a local foods coordinator position to support local farmers markets, community gardens, Bismarck Community Orchard, and the Farm-to-School Program, along with other local foods opportunities.

BisMarket is a local farmers market that operates June through October at Kiwanis Park. People gather, purchase and eat local foods and goods while promoting health and wellness, providing education and showcasing the area's artistic talent. The local foods coordinator has an active role with BisMarket, including maintaining vendor relationships, supervising staff, recruiting entertainment, and working with the board. This year, the coordinator reached out to other local farmers markets to build stronger connections between all markets.

The Bismarck Community Orchard at Clem Kelley Softball Complex is home to apple and plum trees and various berry-producing shrubs. The orchard provides fresh produce for the community and the Hunger Free ND Garden Program and supports educational opportunities for using and preserving fruit. The local foods coordinator hosts clean-up

days and offers programs at the orchard. It also manages community gardens at the Missouri Valley Complex and supports and encourages gardener donations to Hunger Free ND.

The Farm-to-School Program enriches the connection students and teachers have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites. Students gain access to healthy, local foods and educational opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips. The local foods coordinator created educational materials for students, coordinated school field trips and out-of-school programs, and met with producers about both selling produce and hosting field trips. Participants in Bismarck Life After School Program and summer activity centers have enjoyed lessons and activities about local foods.

Beyond the three primary partners, the local foods coordinator has engaged additional partners to support the program's efforts, including Go! Bismarck Mandan, Bismarck Burleigh Public Health, North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, North Dakota Department of Agriculture, and North Dakota Local Foods Development Alliance.



Renae Jochim, Bismarck Parks and Recreation District



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PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Fargo Park District

The Fargo Park District is thrilled to announced the addition of multiple new full-time team members.

- **Brian Daly**, Mechanic
- **Carl Olsen**, Mechanic
- **Chris Olerud**, Park Maintenance
- **Rushelle Flaten**,
Recreation Administrative Assistant
- **Erick Quintero**,
Sports Center Facility Supervisor
- **John McMullen**,
Sports Center Facility Supervisor
- **Gunnar Mogck**,
Edgewood Assistant Golf Professional

The Fargo Park District would not be able to make the community impact we do without the passionate and hard work of our talented employees! We welcome and congratulate each of our new team members and cannot wait to see all they accomplish in their new roles.

Grand Forks Park District



Annie Porath has been hired to work as a horticulture assistant. She joined the forestry/parks department in February. Porath was born and raised in Grand Forks and previously worked in floral design for seven years. She enjoys being outdoors, hiking, camping, and spending time with her golden retriever puppy named June.

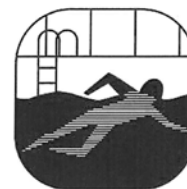
Mandan Park District



Holly Birdine has been hired as an accounting/administrative assistant. She is from Wisconsin but has lived in North Dakota for 24 years, calling Mandan home for the past five. Birdine enjoys being an advocate for the community.



Tom Kriebs has been hired as a park maintenance employee. He was homeschooled and graduated high school in 2018. Kriebs has worked at the Mandan Park District as a part-time maintenance employee for the past seven years at the Starion Sports Complex, Raging Rivers Waterpark and Parks Maintenance Department. In his free time, he likes to relax and be outdoors.



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Teamwork by Roosevelt Park Zoo Staff Breeds Successful Result

On Wednesday, March 6, the Large Felid keeper at Roosevelt Park Zoo in Minot noted that Ilola, one of the female African lions, was not behaving normal. She was not interested in engaging with the keeper nor showing any interest in food. She also showed signs of discomfort and was unable to get comfortable for long before having to get up and move around. Based on her behavior, the zoo staff surmised that she was likely in labor.

That evening, the zoo mobilized a team of zoo staff and local veterinary professionals to perform a C-section on Ilola once it was determined she could not give birth naturally. Zoo staff knew that Ilola was delivered via c-section and her mother had been delivered via c-section so it was likely Ilola's cubs would need to be surgically removed as opposed to giving birth naturally.

A surgical team of two veterinarians, a veterinary technician and an anesthesiologist was responsible for conducting the surgery to remove the cubs and ensure Ilola came through the procedure in good shape. A second team of a local veterinary technician and three of our zookeepers was assigned to cub care. The cub team, or as it wished to be called, the "Cub Crew," was responsible for receiving the cubs once they were removed, cleaning and resuscitating them. The final team was the safety team, which the zoo utilizes during any large carnivore immobilization, was present to ensure the safety of the people working in and around the immobilized animal.

Ilola was immobilized and an X-ray identified two or three large cubs. She was moved to another den in the lion building that had been prepared for the procedure. The surgical team removed three cubs and as they worked to clean and close her up, the Cub Crew worked feverishly to dry the cubs, clear their airways, warm them up and get them breathing.

The first cub was not able to be resuscitated. The second was resuscitated and made her way to the incubator. The third took a while but was finally able to start breathing after a lot of work and eventually joined her sister in the incubator.

Once Ilola was stitched up and ready to be moved, she was returned to her den space that included a den box in which she would raise her cubs. The immobilization drugs were reversed and as she began to show signs of waking up, all



equipment was removed from the room, and she remained under close observation. At this point, the veterinarians turned their attention to the cubs and made sure that they were doing well.

By 11 p.m. that evening, the two female cubs received their first opportunity to feed from bottles prepared by the staff. Cub #2 took to it well, while cub #3 struggled to nurse. She was ultimately fed by a tube to make sure she had the energy to survive. This started a round-the-clock feeding schedule for the newborn cubs requiring staff to bottle feed them every three hours.

As Wednesday turned into Thursday, cub #3 continued to struggle. She would take only a minimal amount of formula prompting staff to give her most of her nutrition via a feeding tube. While she was urinating as normal, she had not passed any feces, which was of great concern. She continued to struggle and on Friday morning, the decision was made to humanely euthanize her.

Meanwhile, cub #2 was doing well. She drank her bottle voraciously, passing plenty of fecal matter and all-in-all appeared healthy and happy. She remained in human care over the weekend and continued to do well as the next week began. On March 13, the decision was made to reintroduce the cub to Ilola. The cub was wiped down with straw from Ilola's bedding to mask the smell of humans and coat her with a smell more familiar to Ilola. She was placed in the den adjacent to the den where Ilola's sister Tadala stayed. When Ilola was moved back into the den with the cub, she immediately went to the cub and started smelling and licking her. This was a good sign and Ilola was showing all the maternal instincts that zoo staff had hoped for.

The only problem was Ilola's milk production. Although we had given her an injection of oxytocin prior to reintroducing the cub, she still did not appear to produce milk, so we began a new treatment that had been successful at other zoos for helping new mothers produce milk.

Zoo staff continued round-the-clock feedings as a supplemental effort to ensure the cub was getting

enough to eat. Sometimes she would suck a bottle down quickly, but other times she drank a little or none, leading staff to think that she was getting some nourishment from Ilola, but not enough for staff to just step away. She is weighed each morning and while growth maybe slow, she was still gaining weight.

Currently, the cub remains with Ilola. Feeding times have been adjusted somewhat but continue around the clock. The zoo will continue with the daily weights and supplemental feedings until either Ilola can produce enough milk or the cub gets old enough to eat solid food.

Ilola is now allowed to spend time with Tadala and Asani, the male, both inside and on exhibit. She recovered well from the surgery and if not for her shaved belly, you wouldn't know that anything had happened.

Bullock said this is the first lion cub to be raised at the zoo since 1980. Records indicate that Roosevelt Park Zoo has held African lions since at least 1965. Records show that cubs were produced in 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980.



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To demonstrate the variety of courses LocalGovU offers, check out the top 10 courses NDIRF members completed in 2023:

**Course summaries provided by LocalGovU (www.ndirf.localgovu.com, accessed Jan. 3, 2024).*

1. Workplace Bullying

When we think of bullying, we immediately associate it with the school yard, certainly not something we face as an adult. Unfortunately, bullying in the workplace occurs more often than you think. In fact, there are various forms of bullying, from overt forms to those which are quite passive. Workplace bullying may have significant consequences for those involved, for yourself as an employee as well as your employer.

2. Defensive Driving Basics

This course will dive into the basics of defensive driving, including its definition, purpose, and importance, as well as the factors that play an important role from the driver’s perspective. We will also discuss the equipment and judgment necessary for driving safely.

3. Advanced Defensive Driving Techniques

This course concentrates primarily on advanced defensive driving techniques. You will be given instruction on how to drive defensively in adverse conditions including heavy rain, snow, and ice.

4. Anti-Harassment in the Workplace

Harassment in the workplace is a serious issue that requires a thorough understanding to promote awareness and ultimately prevention. Improper behavior in the workplace may have significant consequences for those involved, for yourself as an employee, and your employer.

5. Ethical Behavior for Local Government

In this course, we will define ethical behavior, provide examples of work situations where a thorough understanding of workplace ethics may be applied, and ways in which you can determine if your decisions and behavior are meeting the appropriate standards.

6. De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force

In this course, students will learn to identify techniques for de-escalation, plan for minimizing use of force, explain the importance of training officers for these encounters and, lastly, apply these strategies to de-escalate volatile situations. Students will be better equipped mentally to make the critical decisions under stress to de-escalate crisis situations.

7. Successful Customer Interactions

There is a strong correlation between customer satisfaction and the success of a business or department. Welcoming customers means working to create satisfied customers from the inside-out. When local government creates satisfied customers, we create empowered and informed citizens.

8. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

In previous eras, people often became caught in an “either/or” situation because employers were not always cooperative when individuals needed time for personal matters. Employees ran the risk of losing their jobs and benefits if they made the choice of putting their family first. Fortunately, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take the time they need to handle life events. We will go over the FMLA in detail to help you understand the basic provisions and how the FMLA can benefit you.

9. Children and Law Enforcement

The abuse, disappearance, or loss of a child is hard, not only for the family but also on the officer involved in the case. This one-hour training block will touch on tools and resources available to law enforcement in the event of a child related crime as well as the importance of helping officers involved in a case where the death of a child has occurred.

10. Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Improper behavior in the workplace may have significant consequences both for yourself and your employer. Recognizing what sexual harassment is, both the subtle cues as well as the overt advances, will help you to identify potential warning signs and take the necessary steps to report sexual harassment.

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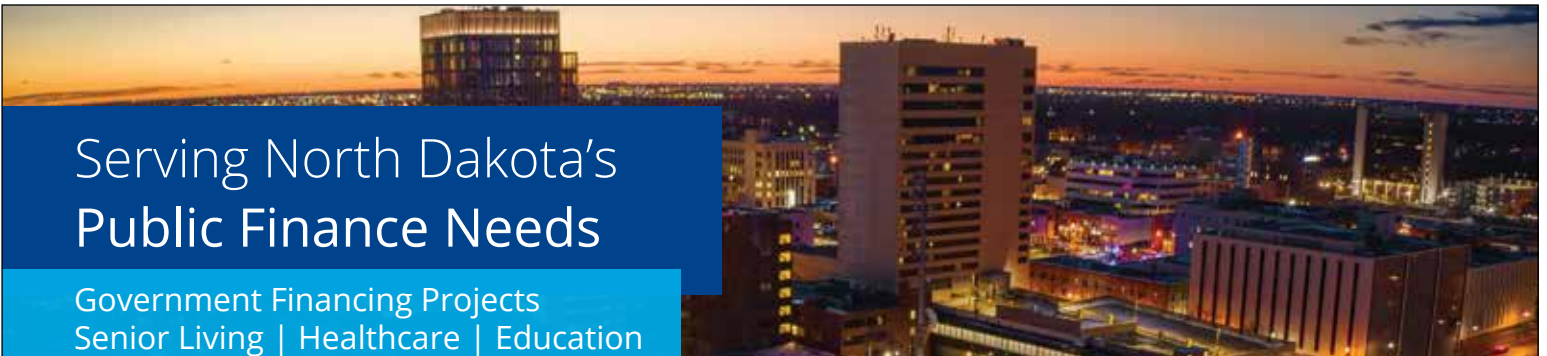
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