

Forum Update

Official Publication of the Mississippi Recreation & Park Association

VOLUME 21

ISSUE 3

MARCH 2008



2007/08 MRPA Board of Directors

President
Don Lewis

President-Elect
Ramie Ford

Secretary/Treasurer
Ann Jones

SRC Representative
Bubba Robinson

MTRA Representative
Vacant

Immediate Past President
Michael Taggart

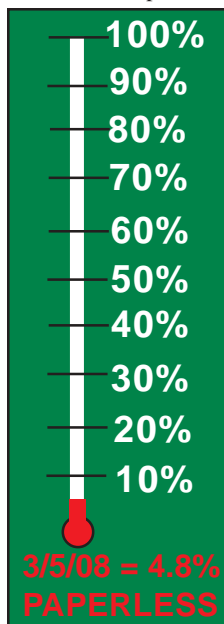
District Representatives:

District One
Will McNeer

District Two
Wendy Bourdin

District Three
Joseph Parker

District Four
Sean Campbell



President's Message

MRPA GOES GREEN

*Don Lewis,
Tupelo Department of Parks and Recreation*

I know that this is the buzz phrase of the day and that all of us keep hearing about **GOING GREEN**. Each of us wants to do our part to save the planet, but the question is how? Thanks to MRPA's initiative, every MRPA member can help protect the environment and avoid wasting over 170 pounds of paper each year simply by checking a box.

There are two ways that you can choose to **GO GREEN**. When you send in your yearly renewal application you can check the "email only" box or you can go to the website (www.aboutmrpa.org) and click the paperless link at the top of the homepage. As of today twenty members have signed up to go paperless. MRPA administration has agreed to add a small paperless meter (*see page 3*) to *Forum Update* so that all of us can keep up with our progress to save the planet. One last thought, if you really don't want to save the planet, what about saving the green backs. With one click of the button we all can save MRPA almost \$10,000 a year in copying and mailing cost.

Your MRPA Board plans to lead by example. Our next board meeting in April will be held electronically. Think about the savings not only in fuel cost, but all documents for the meeting will be viewed on your computer screen. If you have any other cost saving ideas please let us know.

I hope we all choose to do our part!



2008 USTA Super Senior Championships

Tupelo Parks and Recreation along with Tupelo Tennis Association – one parent organization of the twelve different associations associated with the Department has been chosen to host the 2008 Super Senior Tennis Championships scheduled for October 10-12, 2008. This is a Mississippi Championship tournament for tennis players 65+ who will play at Rob Leake City Park and Tupelo Country Club. Tupelo Parks and Recreation is proud to invite over 200 tennis players from all over the state to compete for the state title for the chance to advance to the sectional tournament that will be held in January 2009. For more information please contact (662) 841-6440.

Hershey Track and Field

By now I hope you have secured a date for your local meets and are beginning to make preparation for the **"BIG DAY"**. The State Final will be **Saturday, June 7, 2008**, in Gulfport at Gulfport High School Track on Victory Road. Deadline for turning in results from your **Local Meet** will be **Wednesday, May 28, 2008**, which should include only the winners of each event. Also remember travel expenses will not be provided to anyone for the state meet. Hershey Track and Field Rule Books for the year 2008 have been distributed.

As always, the National Hershey Meet will be held in August in Hershey, PA. All expenses will be paid for the participants who are selected. If you have any questions, cannot meet deadlines, or have not received your rule book, please feel free to contact Larry Davis at ldavis@ci.gulfport.ms.us or 228-868-5889.

USTA Introduces Quickstart Tennis

Quickstart, a new format developed by the USTA, has been launched with the purpose of revolutionizing junior tennis in our country! The format, which has been used similarly by other countries in the past with much success, focuses on downsizing the equipment and court size for children ten and under that are just beginning to play tennis. Just like in other youth sports where smaller fields, courts, balls, and equipment are used before graduating to bigger ones, Quickstart will use 23" and 25" racquets for children 8 and under and ten and under, respectively. Also, 8 and under kids will play on 36' courts while ten and under will play on 60' foot courts. The balls will be different as juniors will learn to play tennis by using a foam ball and then graduating to a low compression tennis ball. The purpose of the format is to make the game easier for juniors to learn, and by using slower balls, lighter racquets, and shorter courts, juniors should be able to start playing more quickly than in the past.

Parents like Quickstart because they get to see their kids learn the sport more quickly, which will enable them to be able to compete at an earlier age too. Kids like the format too because they can build playing skills and confidence at a more rapid pace and begin competition right away instead of just hitting balls. Coaches, teaching pros, and facilities also like Quickstart because it's good business. The format is proven to increase participation and retain more beginners because the players don't get as frustrated, and they feel they are really are learning to play tennis. With more kids on the court at once, it's easier for facilities to maximize court usage as they can put up to twenty-four kids onto one tennis court at a time.

Many facilities across the state have incorporated Quickstart into their teaching formats. Plans are also in the works to include this format as a Junior Team Tennis division in 2008. If you'd like for your child to participate or learn the sport by using these new methods, contact Russell Dendy at 601-981-4421 or russelld@mstennis.com.

Playground Safety Workshop

District Four has forty-seven signed up for the National Playground Safety Institute Safety Inspector Certification Course. The course will be held in Hattiesburg on March 26-28. Many thanks to Ann Jones with Hattiesburg Parks and Recreation for all of her efforts putting the event together.

This is the second course that has been offered through MRPA in as many years. It is evident that there is a growing concern for the safety of children who are using our public and private playgrounds.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 200,000 children are treated annually for playground accidents. Of these, 70 percent of these children were injured at public parks and schoolyards. The NPSI course is the most comprehensive training program on playground hazard identification and risk management methods offered.

2008 Mississippi Senior Olympics

This year's Sr. Olympic Games are scheduled for May 3 - 17. 2008 is a qualifying year for the 2009 National Senior Games to be held in the San Francisco Bay, CA area August 1 - 15, 2009. Events are open to men and women age 50 and over with nine age groupings.

For more information or to be placed on their mailing list, please contact MSO, Baptist HealthPlex, 102 Clinton Parkway, Clinton, MS 39206 or call (601) 925-7994 or email msseniorolym@aol.com. You can also obtain information from their website at www.msseniorolym.org.

National Institute on Recreation Inclusion

Mark your calendars for the 9th Annual National Institute on Recreation Inclusion coming up September 4 - 7 at the Hilton Eugene and Conference Center in Eugene, OR. NIRI is a key event for professionals, educators, students, advocates, parents, therapists, and others who seek basic knowledge about the inclusion process. For more information visit www.nrpa.org/niri or contact conferences@nrpa.org or call (800) 626-6772.

Vicksburg: Featured Community

The site of the upcoming 2008 MRPA Annual Conference and Trade Show, Vicksburg, Mississippi, -was selected by Mississippi Main Street as March's featured Main Street of the month. In 1984, Vicksburg was selected as one of the original six Mississippi Main Street towns. We hope you will take some time during this year's conference to experience downtown Vicksburg.

The MRPA Conference will be held at the Vicksburg Convention Center September 15 - 18. The Education Committee met in March to begin putting the schedule and the educational program together. Anyone with program suggestions should communicate those suggestions during the upcoming District meetings, or you can send them to the MRPA office at info@aboutmrpa.org.

2008 Conference
September 15-18

Hotel Information @
www.aboutmrpa.org

Tri-State Recreation Inclusion Conference

The Tri-State Conference on Recreation Inclusion will be held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg on June 12 and 13 this year. The conference theme for the Sixth Annual Tri-State Conference on Recreation Inclusion is "Leading the Way".

Recreation inclusion is a process that enables an individual, through his or her choice of leisure activities, to be a part of his or her environment by making choices, being supported, having friends and being valued.

The Professional registration fee for the conference is \$90, Student registration is \$40, and Parent/Family member registration is \$40. If you're interested in attending, send your registration fees to Southern Miss Recreation Inclusion c/o Dr. Rick Green, The University of Southern Mississippi, School of Human Performance and Recreation, 118 College Drive #5142, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001. Registration fees are nonrefundable. For more information call (601) 266-5576.

Register Now: National Summit on Environmental Stewardship

The National Summit on Environmental Stewardship for People, Parks and Public Lands will be held on May 4-7, 2008, at the Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront in Portland, Oregon.

NRPA is embarking on an aggressive effort to encourage leaders and advocates of parks, recreation, conservation, and sustainable practices to address the challenges of building environmental stewardship, advancing local leadership in sustainability, and providing leadership for sustainable communities.

Hear inspirational messages from top environmental leaders, including Larry Selzer, president and CEO of the Conservation Fund; Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*; and Gina McCarthy, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Enhance your experience with a series of tours that will explain why Portland is America's "Most Sustainable Big City" and how it consciously protects the environment and connects its communities with nature.

For more information, please call 800.626.6772 or send an e-mail to conferences@nrpa.org. This event is made possible through a generous grant from the National Recreation Foundation.

Congratulations

Mike Goosby announced recently that he will be leaving the City of Jackson and taking on the responsibilities of the Pearl Parks and Recreation Director's position. Congratulations to Mike. We're looking for great things out of the Pearl Department.

History Channel Grant

The Channel's "Save Our History" grants program awards grants of up to \$10,000 to organizations that partner with schools or youth groups on community preservation projects. Projects should engage youth in learning about, documenting, and preserving the history of their communities. They should also inspire students to become tomorrow's preservationists. Museums, historic sites, historical societies, preservation organizations, libraries, parks and recreation commissions, historic commissions, departments of local history, and archives are invited to partner with a local school or youth group and apply for funding. Projects can emphasize the history and/or efforts to preserve a neighborhood, building, cemetery, historic site, historic collections, or an historic event or tradition important to the local community. The project could include primary research, physical preservation or clean-up efforts, historical documentation, archaeological or architectural studies, oral histories, exhibits, or efforts to register or advocate for a site for national, state, or local historic landmark status.

Additional information, including an online application, is available on their Web site <http://www.history.com>. The average grant is \$10,000.

Jr. Olympic Skills Competition

If you're interested in getting your department involved in Jr. Olympics visit www.jrolympicsskills.com. Jr. Olympics includes events in Track & Field, Soccer, Basketball and Tennis. The program is free for boys and girls ages 8 to 13 and is free to administrate. This is a win-win program for your department and your participants.

Small Town Design Workshop

The Carl Small Town Center at the Mississippi State University College of Architecture, Art + Design is planning a design workshop for locally elected officials on Thursday, March 27 and Friday, March 28, on the MSU campus. The workshop will include a one day seminar and a second day where five competitively selected communities will bring a design/recreational challenge in their community to work with the consultants to see if a design solution can be achieved.

The focus of this workshop is recreation, and it is tentatively entitled "Working to Play." The Hearin Foundation funded this workshop as a way to make sure that design was a strong component in economic development in Mississippi communities. The Carl Small Town Center would like to encourage the Mississippi Recreation & Parks Association's involvement. MRPA members Lee Pickett and Chris Chance are co-sponsors of the event.

The CSTC is also trying to contact as many public officials as possible, including community Directors of Parks & Recreation, and even P&R Commission members. Please feel free to contact Michael Weaver Jones with any questions or comments about the program: 662.325.2520 or mjones@caad.msstate.edu.

F. Lamar Evans, Editor
Forum Update
 P.O. Box 16451
 Hattiesburg, MS 39404-6451
 Voice (601) 582-3361
 Fax (601) 582-3354
 Email info@aboutmrpa.org

NONPROFIT
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 Hattiesburg, MS
 Permit #70

*Affiliated with:
 Mississippi Amateur
 Softball Association*




WE'VE LEARNED A LOT FROM **30 YEARS** OF SPORTS LIGHTING INNOVATION
 INCLUDING HOW TO DO IT **FOR HALF** THE OPERATING COST.

Musco's Newest Innovation...
Light-Structure GREEN.

Unequaled performance...
 for your budget, for the environment.

For details call: Jason McNatt
 800/625-6030 (toll-free)
 (602)402-1080 (worldwide)
 www.usa.lighting@musco.com



We Make It Happen.
 www.musco.com
 email: lighting@musco.com



poligon[®]
 PARK ARCHITECTURE



Hammill & Associates, Inc.
 2104 Chapel Hill Road
 Birmingham, AL 35216
 205/979-6616 Fax: 205/979-8530
 1-800-423-6661
 www.hammill.net tomhammill@hammill.net



MIRACLE
 RECREATION EQUIPMENT COMPANY

Cindy Jefcoat Phone: 601-624-KIDS (5437)
Project Manager Fax: 601-939-0652
Mississippi Territory email: crj@jefcoatfence.com
 www.miracle-recreation.com

**JEFCOAT RECREATION AND
 CONSTRUCTION**



Southern Athletic Fields
DIET
 YOU GOTTA LOVE IT

800.837.8062 www.mulemix.com

Mississippi Grass Nursery

We plant fresh, top quality sprigs using our precision equipment on athletic fields of all kinds in Mississippi and surrounding states.

Our grasses include MS Pride, MS Express, and MS Supreme, Tifway 419, Tifway II, and Tifdwarf and Centipede sod.

117 Highway 49 • Hattiesburg, MS 39402
 888-268-9888 • FAX: 601-264-8773
QUALITY TURF FOR THE GULF SOUTH