

# Forum Update

Official Publication of the Mississippi Recreation & Park Association

VOLUME 21

ISSUE 4

APRIL 2008



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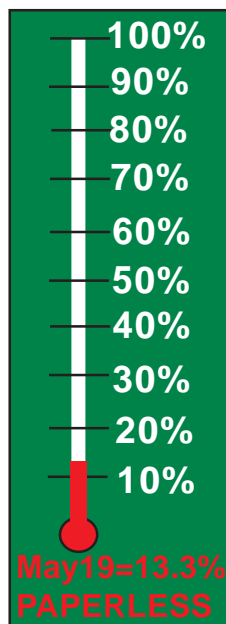
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## President's Message

### Tupelo's Sportplex

*Don Lewis,*

*Tupelo Department of Parks and Recreation*



Tupelo's greatly anticipated \$4.8 million baseball complex at Ballard Park held a high-energy opening the second weekend of May. The BNA Bank Invitational consisting of 45 youth teams; kids ages 8-14 came to town from across the region for multi-level competition. An open house followed Monday May 12<sup>th</sup>, before the Tupelo Department of Parks and Recreation began its summer season of league play at the complex.

The cost of the baseball complex includes \$1 million raised from the private sector in gifts and sponsorships; a continuation of Tupelo's private/public partnership spirit that has made many projects possible through the decades.

The baseball complex's opening heightens the park's visibility as a diverse, major center for fitness activities and recreation. It is one of Tupelo's chief assets in quality of life issues. The motivation in playing is for kids to have fun and learn how to compete, developing skills as they advance in age. The larger reality is tourism and promotion. The cumulative impact is millions of dollars, which also means sales tax collections going into city coffers, coming full circle to pay for parks and recreation programs, facilities and professional staff maintenance.

Baseball remains a premier American sport, and the influence of strong youth programs is seen in quality teams and nationally competitive programs. Some of the best eventually make their way into Major League Baseball, and those players usually point to the beginning in strong recreation league and school programs.

## Complete Streets Under Consideration in House

Thanks to park and recreation advocacy efforts, Complete Streets legislation is gaining momentum in the U.S. Congress. A number of Senators and House members have recently signed on as co-sponsors of the legislation.

Complete Streets is an effort to make our communities safer, healthier and accessible for people of all ages and mobility. Congressional members are being asked to sign on to co-sponsor H.R. 5951 because it would:

- \* Provide safe travel options that incorporate physical activity including walking, bicycling, or riding transit in communities across the country.

- \* Allow the one-third of Americans who do not drive, including many elderly and low income residents, safe access to get to work, school, shops and medical visits, and to take part in social, civic and volunteer activities.

- \* Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion and costly road repairs by reducing our dependency on cars.

## Youth Soccer Player Saves Life

*From National Alliance for Youth Sports*

In the midst of panic on an Idaho youth baseball field, a 14-year-old girl stepped in to perform CPR on a 13-year-old boy who had collapsed while rounding second base. The girl – who was scrimmaging with her soccer team on an adjoining field – noticed a commotion on the baseball field, and took hold of the situation at her 17-year-old brother's urging. The young lady, learned CPR at a Red Cross class for babysitters and in her eighth grade health class. Paramedics said that the CPR likely saved the boy's life. Medical officials are still unsure as to what caused the boy to experience cardiac arrest. He is now listed in stable condition.

CPR was performed on the boy for 15 minutes until paramedics arrived. Among all the adults present at the field that day, the young soccer player was the only one trained in CPR. According to sources, the girl took control of the situation and instructed everyone around her.

## On Paperless Membership

*"To help save trees and better the environment."* Clark Roman, Director of Starkville Park Commission 3/25/08

*"I went paperless because it is more convenient, and I know that I am doing a small part to help the environment."* Kantress Evans, Recreation Therapist, North MS Regional Center 4/7/08

*"to curb additional expenses MRPA absorbs in postal costs"* Guy Smith, Richland Recreation Department 4/23/08

*"I am not a tree hugger but I'm not a tree cutter either. I try to do what I can to conserve our resources. This is a great start."* Michelle Burrell, MRPA Awards Committee Chair & Director of Claiborne County Parks Commission, 4/30/08

## Feedback Opportunity

MRPA asks members for their thoughts on our notification service (Newsbites, *Forum Update*). Whether you like it, don't like it, or have a better idea, we want to know.

Members can complete the survey using the link under Recent Updates on [www.aboutmrpa.org/](http://www.aboutmrpa.org/). These MRPA services are a crucial benefit to potential members, and your feedback will shape future issues as well as new programs.

## New NRPA Weekly News Brief

The National Recreation and Park Association has designed a weekly email to provide you with news that affects the world of parks and recreation. It is created specifically for leaders and advocates in the profession. The *Parks and Recreation Weekly News Brief* will deliver news and information from national, state, local and industry sources right to your inbox.

To sign up, visit the [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).

## Metal Bat Issues

What policies, if any, does your department enforce relative to the use of metal bats in your youth baseball programs? There was a legal case filed recently New Jersey relating to this issue. The outcome of that trial could have an impact in your sports programs.

A number of serious injuries have been reported over the years relating to the use of metal bats. This particular lawsuit claims that a ball hit with a metal bat struck a 13 year-old in the chest causing the child's heart to stop. Before the heart could be restarted, the child suffered serious brain damage leaving him unable to speak, unable to feed, and clothe himself, and unable to walk.

The suit says the metal bat was allowed into the youth baseball program with the organizers knowing it posed a danger to the children playing. The organizers and the youth sports organization involved say there is no hard evidence to support the claims.

It is a well-known fact that these bats make the ball travel faster. In fact, some of the bat manufacturers advertise that their bat can "bean the third baseman with a line drive." Claims like these may not bode very well in the lawsuit.

Some states have banned the use of metal bats due to their potential danger. Other states have the issue under study. We'll all be watching the outcome of this lawsuit.

## Restoring Your Waterfronts

It has been decades since waterfront renovation projects such as Baltimore's Inner Harbor and New York's South Street Seaport have attracted city dwellers with a tempting combination of shops, restaurants, and historical attractions. Replacing derelict warehouses and battered piers with slick urban malls, they were hailed as successful urban revitalization and tourism projects.

There is a renewed interest today in the revitalizing of city waterfront. However, the renewed interest includes attention to parks and green spaces as critical elements to success.

With new popularity and increased development pressures, many have found their most significant opportunity for economic and physical revitalization—the only places left to go—is their derelict edges. This time, parks play a very significant role in that development.

To read more, take a look at "Waterfront and Center" in NRPA's June's magazine issue, and share your experiences, solutions, or thoughts about this emerging trend by e-mailing [edit@nrpa.org](mailto:edit@nrpa.org). As an emerging issue within parks and recreation, we'd like to hear how your community is dealing with waterfront revitalization. We will publish your responses in next month's "Emerging Issues" section in *NRPA Express*.

## Upcoming Events

**NRPA Congress and Exposition**  
October 11 - 18, 2008  
Baltimore, MS  
Visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)

**MRPA State Convention and Trade Show**  
September 15 - 18, 2008  
Vicksburg, MS  
Visit [www.aboutmrpa.org](http://www.aboutmrpa.org)

## 2008 MISSISSIPPI ASA ADULT SLOW-PITCH STATE TOURNAMENTS

	Where	When	Who	Phone
<b>MEN'S SLOW-PITCH</b>				
C Overall State	Starkville	Aug 8-10	Clark Roman	662-323-2294
D Sub State	Batesville	July 18-20	Bubba Robinson Doc	662-232-2390
D Overall State	Ridgeland	Aug 8-10	Jenkins	601-634-0276
E Sub State	Batesville	July 18-20	Bubba Robinson Rick	662-232-2390
E Overall State	Meridian	Aug 8-10	Roberson	601-693-4463
Church State	Tupelo	Aug 15-16	Seth Gaines	662-841-6440

### WOMEN'S SLOW-PITCH

C & D Overall State	Brookhaven	Aug 1-2	Terry Reid	601-833-3791
E Overall State	Brookhaven	Aug 1-2	Terry Reid	601-833-3791

## 2008 MISSISSIPPI ASA JUNIOR OLYMPIC STATE TOURNAMENTS

### J.O. Girls SLOW-PITCH

8-Under Coach-Pitch North State	Columbus	July 4-6	Roger Short	662-327-4935
8-Under Coach-Pitch South State	Laurel	July 4-6	Pam Holifield	601-270-2652
8-Under Coach-Pitch Overall State	Ridgeland	July 18-19	Chris Chance	601-853-2011
10-Under Overall State	Columbus	June 27-29	Roger Short	662-327-4935
12-Under Overall State	Columbus	June 27-29	Roger Short	662-327-4935
14-Under Overall State	Columbus	June 27-29	Roger Short	662-327-4935
16-Under Overall State	Columbus	June 27-29	Roger Short	662-327-4935
18-Under Overall State	Columbus	June 27-29	Roger Short	662-327-4935

### J.O. Girls FAST-PITCH

10-Under Magnolia Classic	Clinton	July 11-12	Ray Holloway	601-924-6082
10-Under- B State	Oxford	July 11-12	Bubba Robinson	662-232-2390
10-Under- C State	Meridian	July 18-20	Rick Roberson	601-692-6888
12-Under Magnolia Classic	Ridgeland	July 11-12	Chris Chance	601-853-2011
12-Under- B State	Tupelo	July 11-12	Seth Gaines	662-841-6440
12-Under- C State	Meridian	July 18-20	Rick Roberson	601-692-6888
14-Under Magnolia Classic	Clinton	July 11-12	Ray Holloway	601-924-6082
14-Under- B State	Tupelo	July 11-12	Seth Gaines	662-841-6440
14-Under- C State	Meridian	July 18-20	Rick Roberson	601-692-6888
16-Under Magnolia Classic	Ridgeland	July 11-12	Chris Chance	601-853-2011
16-Under- B State	Gulf Coast	July 11-12	Tom Stanley	228-365-2301
18-Under Magnolia Classic	Clinton	July 11-12	Ray Holloway	601-924-6082
18-Under- B State	Gulf Coast	July 11-12	Tom Stanley	228-365-2301

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