

Forum Update

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September 10-13
Tupelo, MS

MRPA Awards Program

The Awards Banquet is a major part of the annual MRPA Convention. The awards program is a great opportunity for you to help MRPA recognize professionals and agencies that are helping make a difference in the park and recreation field. It also gives us the chance to reward significant contributions made during the past year.

The MRPA Awards Committee and Board of Directors have made some major changes to the program. The awards will remain the same but the three following awards will be broken down into three different population classes, allowing for nine (9) overall winners instead of three (3):

- Hayward "Bo" Phillips Design Award of Merit
- Special Event Award of Merit
- Arts and Humanities Award of Merit

These changes will present more opportunities for you to recognize our professionals and agencies. For more information about the award criteria and nomination forms go to www.aboutmrpa.org. Nominations must be submitted by August 10, 2007.

MRPA District Elections

Don Lewis – President Elect

MRPA needs your help! In August the four MRPA Districts will be holding their last meeting before the MRPA Convention. Some of the Districts will be electing new representatives and appointing new committee representatives for 2007-2008. If you have been looking for a way to get involved in your state association this could be your answer.

The District representatives and committee members are the direct link between the membership and the MRPA Board. They represent the interest of their districts, the interest of MRPA, and the interests of the parks and recreation profession.

The District representatives are responsible for appointing the following committee members:

- Athletic
- Awards
- Educational/Development
- Nominations and Elections

If you would like to help make a difference in MRPA at either the district or state level please contact your District Representative or any MRPA Board member. This association belongs to all of the members and it is up to all of us to make a difference.

FREE Hat, Tackle Box and Keychain

The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation and NRPA have developed the Take Me Fishing Community Initiative to support local park and recreation agencies eager to increase recreational fishing and boating participation by improving the quality of their community fishing and boating programs. Interested? Complete the pre-assessment and receive a FREE hat, tackle box and keychain (while supplies last)! Visit www.nrpa.org for more information.

Job Opening

The Columbus/Lowndes Recreation Authority is seeking a dynamic, energetic individual for the position of Sports Coordinator. The candidate will be creative, innovative, and possess the skills and knowledge to plan, implement, and manage a diverse range of sports programs. Successful applicant will be required to work a varying work schedule including some nights, weekends, or holidays. Salary is dependent upon qualifications and experience. Qualifications and benefits information are available at MDES. Applicants should submit a resume with cover letter along with three personal and three professional references to: Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 400-B Wilkins Wise Rd, Columbus, MS 39705 no later than August 31, 2007.

Hershey National Contenders Chosen

This year five young men and women have been selected to represent Mississippi Recreation Parks Association at the Hershey Track and Field National Meet on Saturday, August 4, 2007 in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

The National Meet brings participants from all over the country to Hershey, PA. to compete in the National Final. Five hundred & Fifty participants plus chaperones are treated to an all expense paid three day event that includes a tour of the Hershey chocolate factory, a day in Hershey amusement park, meeting famous athletes, and competing in a nationally recognized track meet.

These are the participants that will represent the MRPA:
Cameron Shoemo and Keturah Jones of Pascagoula
Senquez Golson of Gautier
Courtland Barnes of Oxford
Richuad Floyd of Gulfport

More Smoking Bans

The Cities of Ridgeland, Pascagoula and Greenwood have joined other Mississippi communities that have banned smoking in public places. Thanks and let's continue to promote a healthy living style in Mississippi by avoiding tobacco use, especially around our parks.

Mississippi's cardiovascular disease mortality rate is the highest in the nation, and is the leading cause of death in our state. Cancer is Mississippi's #2 killer, ranking fourth in cancer mortality in the U.S. in 2004. Diabetes contributes to the deaths of 1,600 Mississippians each year. Mississippi also ranks number one – the highest in the nation – in obesity, while 81% of adult Mississippians say they are not physically active on a regular basis.

Archery's Hot

Looking for an activity that provides exercise, improves math skills, teaches etiquette, requires focus, reduces stress, and is – oh, yeah – lots of fun?

Archery is gaining in popularity all over the U.S. in schools, recreation districts, home-school associations, retirement communities, and clubs. Once administrators see the National Safety Council's numbers ranking archery as one of the safest sports, once they understand just how easy and affordable it is to set up and run an archery program, and once their first class fills up with happy participants who want more...it's no surprise that Archery is the hot new trend in recreation.

Students are often introduced to archery in physical education class, scouts, or camp, which typically run shorter programs aimed at beginners. Many park and recreation departments are now seeing the demand for a more sustained archery program where students can improve their skills, eventually acquire their own equipment, and practice for competition.

Archery is contagious. Many recreation departments start with a beginner's class for kids but end up offering classes for teens, families, seniors, plus competitive teams and leagues.

For those with Olympic dreams, archery has many advantages. The equipment is affordable, official competitions are held all over the country and are open (don't require pre-qualification), and archery can be practiced year round, indoors or out. The JOAD (Junior Olympic Archery Development) program, from USA Archery, archery's Olympic governing body for the United States, is easy to offer and is one of the archery programs available from NADA, the National Alliance for the Development of Archery.

Other programs offered by NADA include *The Way of The Bow*, an archery curriculum that explores the diverse culture and history of archery (Japanese Kyudo, Native American, Ancient Roman, and others) in addition to learning how to shoot. *ArrowFaith*, a faith-based curriculum that explores the personal virtues that are necessary if one aspires to excel at archery (such as responsibility, perseverance, and mindfulness) combines the fun of shooting with personal development. *GoArchery!* is a program designed by two-time Olympic coach Lloyd Brown to set up beginners with optimal form, while having fun learning the sport. Information on these and other archery programs is available at www.TeachArchery.org.

This article submitted by the National Alliance for the Development of Archery.

Live • Laugh • Learn Together

MRPA Annual Convention

Tupelo, MS

September 10-13

Convention Registration deadline is August 10.

Hernando Parks and Recreation: On the Move

The City of Hernando is concerned about the health of its citizens and is making enormous strides to meet their athletic, fitness, and recreational needs.

Public parkland highlights the natural beauty surrounding a city, and adults and children alike benefit from the opportunities for relaxation and play that parks can provide. This year, as part of its overall development strategy, Hernando has adopted a master park plan. Eleven new parks are proposed, two of which will be 75 to 100 acres. In August, construction begins on the first phase of an 18-acre park at Lee's Summit that eventually will include a lake, walking trail and gazebo, as well as ample parking. The U.S. Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks is providing \$150,000 in funding for the project.

Physical activity is critical for the health of our young people, and Hernando has partnered with three organizations to sponsor youth sports: the Hernando Youth Football Association, NoXcuses Basketball and the YMCA. A number of children participate in the YMCA's soccer program, and this August, NoXcuses will kick off the city's youth basketball league with 3-on-3 and 5-on-5 basketball camps.

Recognizing that health and wellness is important for their parents, too, the City has installed a 20-station fitness center at the Hernando Sports and Fitness Park. This has been a huge success! The equipment is designed for adults of all ages and fitness levels, and a lot of people are using it.

This summer, construction started on a community center that will serve both our youth and the growing number of seniors in our area. The multi-purpose facility, located at the Gale Center, will feature an exercise/dance room, game area, a computer center and classrooms. To meet the recreational needs of those age 55 and up, this year the city also launched Young at Heart, a program that offers exercise classes, games, line dancing and other leisure activities. Today, 240 of our citizens participate.

Hernando is committed to providing quality parks and recreation opportunities for all of its citizens. For more information about Hernando Parks and Recreation, contact Dwayne Williams, CPSI at hernandoparks@bellsouth.net or 662-429-2688.

Childhood Obesity Grants Announced

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) today awarded 10 states \$100,000 in funding to enhance childhood obesity prevention efforts in schools and communities. **Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia** each received a grant to improve the overall health and nutrition of America's children.

The funding will support the development of state

strategies to prevent childhood obesity by instituting social changes, leading public-sector policy initiatives and influencing private-sector efforts. In addition, states will be able to conduct a statewide analysis of existing efforts related to obesity prevention.

Conference Registration Time is Here - Deadline for Early Registration is August 10

The preregistration information for this year's annual conference has been in the mail now for approximately 30 days. If you have not received it, please call (601) 583-3361 or email info@aboutmrpa.org. You can also visit the MRPA website at www.aboutmrpa.org and click on the "conference" tab. You can download the program as well as a registration form. The deadline for registration is early (August 10) this year because the conference is earlier. Rooms at the Hilton Garden will not be held at the MRPA conference price after August 10, so make sure you make your room reservation today.

You don't want to miss this year's keynote speaker, Deborah Tierce. In line with the conference theme, her opening presentation is called "Laugh, Love & Leave a Legacy - Three Prescriptions for Daily Living!" Deborah will also present two other sessions entitled "Communicating Like a Pro". You'll learn about your communication style, identify the seven elements of the Speech Communication Process, and learn how to have a Crucial Conversation. Deborah is a consultant, trainer and motivational speaker representing Tierce Motivational Training.

Social events during the conference will include an all-conference luncheon on Monday followed by the golf tournament or a frisbee golf tournament. We'll all gather at the Automobile Museum on Monday evening for a social sponsored by the Tupelo Sports Council.

Other educational sessions topic areas include sports medicine, the NRPA Operational TCL2 Program, health and fitness, inclusion recreation, advocating for people with disabilities, fantasy sports, hiring a professional staff, trail grant opportunities, professional challenges in the therapeutic recreation profession, and many many more.

There will also be an update on the MRPA recreation athletic tournament program, information from the Mississippi Tennis Association, the ASA/USA softball program, and the Mississippi Soccer Association.

If you are an employee working in the park and recreation or therapeutic recreation profession, you don't want to miss this year's conference. You'll leave with a tremendous amount of information that will make your job easier and more productive.

Register today and don't forget to reserve your room at the Hilton Garden Inn in Tupelo by calling (662) 718-5500 before August 10.

LIVE • LAUGH • LEARN TOGETHER
MRPA 2007 Convention
September 10-13

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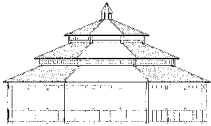
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