



Spring/Summer 2024

REC CONNECT NEWSLETTER



Message from Executive Director

Happy Spring!

It's such a great time of year as the weather warms up, snow melts (sorry snow lovers) and we begin to see the tree's blossom and many outdoor sports and activities return. The new Executive Board will be announced at the Thursday, May 9th Business Meeting at 9:30am at HealthTrust located at 25 Triangle Park Drive in Concord NH. The Executive Board will also be voting on next year's budget at the meeting.

As we move toward summer many of you will get busy with summer camps and programs. Why not get your camp staff ready for a great summer by registering them to attend the Wink Tapply Playground Leader workshop that will take place on Saturday, June 8th at the Bessie Rowell Community Center in Franklin. This is always a great day full of team building and learning. I am looking forward to attending this year as a speaker and I hope to see many of you there!

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your engagement in our association. There are many new names on the NHRPA Election ballot and we continue to see both new and familiar faces as our workshops and events. Please remember that this organization is here for you to help you be able to be the best you can be for your town or city. I would also like to thank our commercial members and our VIP members for your continued support of NHRPA! Wishing you all a safe and healthy spring and summer and I hope to see you all at the NHRPA State Conference this fall on Thursday, October 17th as the Concord Parks & Recreation Community Center. Registration for vendors will be opening soon followed by participant registration this summer.

Kerry Horne M.Ed., Executive Director, NHRPA

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Happy Reading!!!

NHRPA Diversity Statement:

“New Hampshire Recreation and Parks Association is committed to making diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging a priority towards achieving our mission. We strive to accomplish these common ideals for the betterment of our membership and the communities that they serve.”

NHRPA PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Greetings NHRPA Members

After unexpected snow to New England at the beginning of the month; spring has finally come to New Hampshire. Like all of you, we are busily preparing for Spring & Summer Programs and Events and spending a lot of time trying to hire all the staff we need to work for us this summer.

I was thrilled to see the tremendous turnout to the 2nd Annual Summer Camp Summit which was held on April 11th. As I mentioned during the training, there is a new resource page on the NHRPA Website geared specifically towards Summer Camp Resources. I have included on this page some of my own operations & procedure manuals from my Summer Camp program as well as the slide show from the presentation I gave at the training which details what the requirements are if a community wanted to become a licensed camp. We built this page for you and so if you have documents from your camp that you willing to share, you can email them to Kerry Horne at executivedirector@nhrpa.com

Also mentioned during the training; the Department of Health & Human Services is starting to draft new regulations for Summer 2025 and initially they were pushing to eliminate the municipal exemption from the licensing requirements. With the help of the NH Municipal Association, we have been able to successfully squash that proposal, but will be continuing to monitor those draft regulations to ensure there are no surprises. The updated regulations are expected to come out next Fall.

Speaking of Summer Camp, registration is now available for this year's Wink Tap-ple Playground Leaders Workshop which will be held on Saturday June 8th from 9:00 – 2:30 pm at the Bessie Rowell Community Center in Franklin. This day-long training is geared to training your front-line Camp Staff.

The Granite State Track & Field is a program of NHRPA and sponsored by many businesses around the state. This is an inexpensive program that you can offer to your community and then you have the opportunity to send your team to the State Track State Meet which will be held on Saturday June 15th at Winnisquam High School, Tilton, NH. The program is continuing to grow, and registration is open if you have an interest in starting a new program within your community. Complete details can be found on the event website at: <https://granitestatetrackandfield.weebly.com/>

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the direction of NHRPA or if there is any way that the Association can serve you better. If I do not talk to you sooner, I wish you all a wonderful summer!

Respectfully Submitted, Matt Casparius, CPRE
NHRPA President, mcasparius@merrimacknh.gov

NHRPA Executive Board

President: Matt Casparius
Merrimack Parks & Recreation

President Elect: David Tovey
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John Kohlmorgen
Jaffrey Recreation

Calendar of Events:

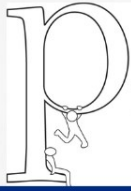
5.9.2024—NHRPA Business Meeting @ HealthTrust

6.8.2024—Wink Tapply Workshop @ Bessie Rowell Community Center

6.15.2024—Granite State Track & Field State Meet @ Winnisquam High School

10.17.2024—NHRPA State Conference @ Concord Parks & Recreation Community Center

[Full Events Calendar](#)



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Wink Tapply Playground Leader's Workshop

06/08/2024, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

@ Bessie Rowell Community Center, 12 Rowell Drive, Franklin, NH 03235

Agenda:

8:30-9:00 Registration, coffee, and light refreshments

9:00–10:00 Rise & Shine – Icebreakers & Quick Activities Join us this morning as we learn how to engage and shake off the nerves while in a large group setting. You will leave this session with some icebreaker games and activities that you can use in your own camp. You will also get tips and tools on how to deliver a game or activity and what the participants should get out of it. Speaker: Dan Sturgeon – Director of Recreation and Leisure Activities, Moultonborough

10:15–11:00 Choose one of the following 45-minute sessions

Water Safety & Summer Camp Risk Management. This session will focus on summer camp safety and discuss the added risk field trips to beaches and water parks pose to campers and staff. Participants will learn ways to reduce that risk and will leave with my top 10 summer camp safety tips. Speaker: Kerry Horne – Executive Director of NHRPA—Location: Meeting Room

Nature Explorers: Finding Ways to Connect Nature & Camp. The natural world is all around, but campers don't always notice what's there. We'll explore easy activities and nature-based crafts that give your campers new ways of being outside and experiencing the nature around them. Speaker: Mirka Zapletal – Newfound Lake Region Association—Location: Activity Room

Connection Through Play: Camp Games for an Unforgettable Summer. At the heart of every game lies the opportunity to strengthen bonds and recharge our passions. Join us as we facilitate games designed to foster the type of connections vital for creating unforgettable camp experiences. Speaker: Brianne Rafford-Varley – Keene Parks and Recreation—Location: Gym



11:15–12:00 Choose one of the following 45-minute sessions

Once Upon a Time...We Went on a Bear Hunt...Incorporating camp songs, stories, games, and movement with music, and improv, makes the camp experience even more memorable for all. Transition times, meal and snack times, field trips, (especially when the bus is late), downtime, overnights, etc. are enhanced through silly camp songs, games, stories, and movement. And YOU don't have to be a great (or even good) singer, professional storyteller, or improv actor to incorporate such activities into the camp setting. This session will review the why, where, when, and how of including these creative activities in the Rec Camp setting. Speaker: Donna Kuethe – Recreation Professional. Location: Fitness Room

Kids WILL Do Dumb Stuff, But YOU Can't! Are you ready for summer as a counselor? Join this session to learn some basic safety, operational and procedural dos, and don'ts as you get ready for summer! This session will be a facilitated discussion on what it means to be a positive leader and how to have an impact on your campers. Summer camps and programs have a lot of risk in them. We will also walk the path of identifying areas of risk in your camps and programs. Together we will learn what it means to be a leader who is present in their position and always looking to mitigate risk. Speaker: Rick Alpers - Primex Insurance Location: Meeting Room

Why Mentoring Youth Matters. This 45-minute session will be a hands-on small and large interactive group setting. Participants attending this session will: 1) be able to understand basic skills and concepts that contribute to effective mentoring programs, 2) dive into the six qualities that make a good mentor for the youth of today 3) experience a Voice, Choice, and Value exercise between the mentor/mentee relationship, and 4) provide participants with recommendations and resources to help them support youth who have faced experiences with trauma, crisis, and mental health issues. Speaker: Beth Dever, Circle Program Executive Director. Location: Activity Room

12:00–12:30 Lunch in Gym

12:30–2:00 Choose one of the following

Camp Olympics - For Camp Counselors & CIT's. Get ready for an afternoon of fun!! Your staff will work together as a team in different camp Olympic games against other Recreation Departments. Each department will receive points for each event. Each of the departments should come prepared to show off your camp spirit, singing skills, sportsmanship, and creativeness! Speaker: Regina Richford – Tapply Thompson Community Center

Humans First: How to Become a Leader That Can Have Great Relationships & Still Run a Solid Program – For Program Leaders & Directors. Hone your leadership skills in this session by examining your views about leadership as well as exploring and considering this approach. Then, learn about how to apply this approach in your program through examples, a role-play activity, and/or small group discussions. The goal of this session is to teach you a new way to look at your leadership and how it could transform your program for the better. Speaker: Julia Chidester – Peterborough Recreation Department

2:00–2:30 Closing remarks, Awards, Raffle, and Ice Cream!

Time to relax, visit, and enjoy a mountainous bowl of ice cream with all the toppings you can fit! Win great door prizes to take back and use at camp.

Turn in your Completed Evaluation Form at the end of the day and get a raffle ticket for a chance to win one of (2) \$25 Gift Cards!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER YOUR STAFF TODAY!](#)

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 **2:00 - 3:15 p.m. EST**

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NH State Parks Bus Pass Program

New Hampshire State Parks Bus Pass Program is designed to promote recreational opportunities within state parks for New Hampshire based community recreation programs, non-profit youth programs, and state agency youth programs during summer months by providing passes at a discounted rate. Program information and pricing can be found on our website including the application process.

<https://www.nhstateparks.org/rentals/school-and-youth-groups/bus-pass-program>

The Division of Parks and Recreation will require 7-10 business days for processing from the date the application is received. Please allow additional time for shipping, there will be no expedited process so please make sure you leave plenty of time and submit your application early.



From the Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development

Who We Are:

The Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development (ORID) advances strategies leveraging New Hampshire's vast outdoor resources to drive economic development.

Working with state and industry partners, ORID coordinates outdoor recreation policy, management and promotion among state and federal agencies and local governments. In support of New Hampshire's diverse outdoor industry, ORID promotes sustainable land stewardship and developing long-term economic development opportunities through strategic planning for outdoor recreational amenities, benefits, assets, and partners.

ORID promotes economic development; recommends policies and initiatives to enhance amenities; develops outcome-driven data; promotes health and social benefits and advances sustainable land stewardship initiatives. Its priorities include workforce development strategies and solutions in communities that benefit of low- and moderate-income residents.

New Hampshire's countless lakes, mountains, beaches, rivers, trail systems and other outdoor recreation spaces are the foundation of the state's economy. They attract sustainable businesses and a diverse workforce and preserves the state's resources for use by future generations.

Grant Opportunities:

- [NH Recreational Trails Program](#) (RTP) has just opened. Mandatory info sessions will be held on May 8th (Concord) and 15th (Lancaster). Application deadline is June 14th.
- [NH Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) (LWCF) is also currently open. Preliminary application form is due June 7.

NH Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

A link to New Hampshire's 2024-2028 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Management Plan can be found on the Community Recreation section of N.H. State Parks' website at bit.ly/49FcqVI.

For More Information Contact:

Janel Lawton, Director
Email: janel.m.lawton@livefree.nh.gov



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2023-24 Updates from University of New Hampshire Recreation Management and Policy Department

RMP has fully bounced back from COVID and is thriving with strong student enrollments across our three options – *Program and Event Management*, *Therapeutic Recreation*, and *Outdoor Leadership and Management* – and great faculty contributions to NH’s priorities in the recreation field. Here are some recent highlights:

- An RMP team including Dr. Mike Ferguson, Clinical Assistant Professor Matt Frye, and Dr. Lauren Ferguson completed the NH State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- We are sending eighty-five students out on internships this summer!
- Dr. Guangzhou Chen joined our department and will begin working with Cooperative Extension on engagement activities around NH in Fall 2024
- We hosted U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland at the UNH Browne Center
- We supervised the first-in-the-nation Outdoor Recreation Policy Fellow, co-sponsored with NEMO Equipment in Dover and the UNH Carsey School of Public Policy
- Drs. Cindy Hartman and Jayson Seaman wrapped up an NSF-funded study on outdoor recreation and STEM as part of their work with the *NH Youth Retention Initiative (YRI)*
- RMP faculty and students joined NHRPA at the Northern New England Recreation and Parks conference for the second year in a row!
- Northeast Passage provides Recreational Therapy services in 28 schools and their top tier Sled Hockey Team recently captured the highly competitive Mid-West Sled Hockey League title. NEP is also developing micro-credential training for recreational therapists to complete CEUs – stay tuned!

Scan the QR codes below to learn more!

RMP WEBSITE



NH SCORP



NH YRI



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2024 NHRPA Awards Wrap-up

Thursday, April 11th, 2024, marked another successful Awards Ceremony. The Awards Committee was honored to grant many well-deserving individuals some of our most prestigious awards. We also honored some wonderful programs and Fab 4 Photos.

Aimee Gigandet of Newmarket Parks and Recreation received the Wink Tapply Award. This award represents a service level above all and their sacrifices. Aimee Gigandet has served the Town of Newmarket for over 20 years. Her dedication, innovation, and integrity have made Aimee a role model for the last two decades.

While focusing on the town of Newmarket, she annually seeks to raise the next generation of professionals with interns from the University of New Hampshire. She has shared insights at every level and has worked with dozens of interns from UNH. Giving herself with every intern to show her passion and why they are choosing the best profession in the world. Her programs have been nationally recognized, she created a National Water Balloon Day, and has incredible creativity. She introduced NHRPA to social media, served as President back in 2005, designed and executed the NHRPA newsletter from 2006-2015, she has presented multiple sessions at the State, NNE's and others, had a published article in the NRPA magazine, has written multiple articles in the NHRPA newsletter, and has received countless awards from NHRPA with many of them for cutting edge programming. Aimee is a constant professional; she lives and breathes why we each love what we do in the profession of recreation and parks.

Having come from the hospitality world, Aimee understands customer service, but what she provides and understands so well is the customer experience. She takes her programs to another level. Participants rave about her programs, interns learn beyond the basics of how to run a successful camp or program, and she places countless hours into whatever she is doing.

Aimee gets things done, before NHRPA hired an Executive Director, everyone volunteered to get things done, and she was at the heart of it. Somewhere around 2009, the State stopped doing the NHRPA newsletter, Aimee quickly volunteered and maintained the publishing for several years. There is no committee for NHRPA that Aimee has not been a part of, she is that type that just gives back. The hard part is that when you try to determine that we all have the same amount of time, Aimee has a little bit more in her tank.

Visions of Aimee sitting at a table with Wink and talking programs, he would be in awe of Aimee Gigandet. Additionally, if Wink were sitting at one of Aimee's sessions, he would be poking his neighbor saying, "we need to bring this back to our department," because at every session that is what everyone is doing. She is gifted with the ability to share her creativity and make it relatable to her audience. Aimee has exhibited the characteristics and high character values associated with "Wink" and is very much deserving of this award.

The Merrimack Lions Club received the High Five Award for their ongoing and continued support of Parks & Recreation. Whenever there is a need in the community, they are the first ones to step up and offer to help with a project or proposal. Some of the ways they have been involved with helping Parks & Recreation include Adoption of one of our Summer Camp Buildings which included maintenance and repair of a building that was falling apart. They have participated in many annual Community Clean Ups and provide volunteers for Community Blood Drives three times a year. They provide an activity table at the Annual Halloween Party, Winter Carnival and National Night Out Events and have hosted an Ice Fishing Derby over multiple years.

For 7 years, they have sponsored Summer Movies in the Park and provided financial support to Girl Scout Projects that were benefiting Parks & Recreation. Financially they make annual donations to the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund for low-income families and provided seed money to establish a new scholarship fund for the After School Program. Thank you to Merrimack Lions club for their continued support and always being the first group in town to step up.

Conway Parks and Recreation was honored with the Rowland “Kim” Perkins Special Event Program Award for their Cops at Camp Event. The Conway Police Department has always been in close contact with the Conway Parks and Recreation Department throughout the year. They provide training and protection for the department along with partnerships in events such as Touch a Truck, the Halloween Party, and the annual Mobile Easter Egg Hunt. After a pizza and dodgeball evening in the winter of 2023, Chief Chris Mattei and Recreation staff began throwing around the idea of a "Cops at Camp Day" in partnership with the summer program. What started out as an idea for a few officers to play a few games one morning turned into a much bigger event. The idea/goal behind the event was to show the police are there to protect and serve, to show they can be approached and trusted and most importantly that they are fun people, and they like to play games too! During planning, it was decided that the Police would drop off plain white T-shirts that the campers would decorate leading up to the event. They did so in arts and crafts sessions throughout the weeks leading up to the event. Chief Mattei made this event optional for his staff but nearly every officer and dispatcher volunteered and showed up for the event. The Parks and Rec summer staff planned out the day's activities so that the cops would have a session with each age group and play an age-appropriate game. The youngest kids played rock paper scissors race, the middle group played dodgeball and the oldest group played kickball. In addition, there was a dance-off with multiple campers. Cops also took time to sit and chat with lots of different campers. The day wrapped up with the Conway Police Department buying the entire camp pizza for lunch. The cops and campers chatted through lunch, telling stories, laughing, and smiling. The event was staffed by normal summer staff and there was no cost to the department as the police provided the shirts and pizza and arts and crafts supplies were used from normal supplies. There were rousing reviews from campers, cops, and parents. All who took part asked if it could be done again. This event helps build a bridge between police and young kids and shows them that they are approachable trustworthy people.

The Clarence B. “Willie” Shellnutt Program Award was given to Amherst Parks and Recreation for Adventure Mom’s Club. Adventure Mom’s Club began this past year where Moms of all backgrounds in Amherst dropped the kids off at school and came together to embark on a new adventure with other daring, like-minded moms who were brave enough to try something new and fun! Each month the group of moms went on a guided adventure in the greater Amherst area. The adventures included snowshoeing, hiking, biking, and paddleboarding. They filled the months with exciting adventures for this amazing, well-deserved group of moms. Throughout the course of the program the moms made new and lasting friendships and memories that they continue to grow and enjoy. Amherst realized there was a need for moms to get together after their hectic mornings of getting the kids up and ready for school and they needed to do something for themselves. The program met three times a month in the mornings for an hour and each month focused on a new adventure. Some of the moms who had never tried paddleboarding, biking or snowshoeing came out and joined the group for the morning adventure. Staff would lead the activities each week and they soon realized how much moms needed this program and looked forward to it each week. The equipment was even supplied for each participant for the adventure. The carry-over value was huge as many of the moms made new friendships and tried new things they would not necessarily have tried. The local need Adventure Moms Club fulfilled focused on moms and creating a space for them to feel good about themselves and do something for themselves without children by offering something new and exciting.

Additionally, Alton Parks and Recreation received a Clarence B. "Willie" Shellnut Program Award Honorable Mention for their Alton Trails All Star Program. Alton Trails All Star is an ongoing hiking challenge. To become a Trails All Star, the participant must hike seven local trails, take a photo for proof at each one, and then submit them to Alton Parks and Recreation in exchange for a sticker! A hiking challenge is a great motivator for the community to get outside and exercise because they are working towards something. It also gave them the chance to discover local trails that they otherwise may not have known about.

Alton Parks and Recreation also received the Communication Savvy Award for their Social Media presence. To reach the community about their programs and events, they create flyers and post them on Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as share them to the Public Facebook Community Page. They post photos and videos from the programs and events thanking the community for attending, in hopes of connecting the community as well as promoting future programs. They create each flyer uniquely to the program, so they stand out from each other. And to break up the flow of flyers, they will post pictures from past events to get the community excited for the upcoming event, and photos of current programs to engage in potential participants. And for the planners, they create Facebook events for programming, so community members who click "interested in the event", will be reminded, and they can add it to their calendars.

Some fun statistics they shared:

Their Facebook page in 2023:

- 34.8K people were reached (35.7% increase from the previous year)
- 20.8K people visited our page (240.1% increase)
- Their Instagram page in 2023:
- 361 people were reached (37.3% increase from the previous year)
- 358 people visited our profile (88.4% increase)

Emily Collins of Alton Parks and Recreation received the Professional Development Award to be able to attend the Northern New England Parks and Recreation Conference.

We have many great photos this year! Congratulations to Holderness, Salem, Newmarket, Lincoln-Woodstock, and the Tapply Thompson Community Center for each receiving a Fab 4 FOTO Award.

Thank you to all the Departments that took the time to submit for an award and congratulations to all award recipients.

Special thanks to our sponsors:



***Andy Bohannon presents Aimee Gigandet
The Wink Tapply Award***





Conway Parks & Recreation
Kim Perkins Special Event Award



Merrimack Lions Club
Winner High Five Award



Newmarket Recreation
Fab 4 FOTO Award



Amherst Recreation
Clarence B. Willie Shellnut Award



Holderness Recreation
Fab 4 FOTO Award



Newmarket Recreation
Fab 4 FOTO Award



Lincoln Woodstock Recreation
Fab 4 FOTO Award



Tapply Thompson Community Center
Fab 4 FOTO Award



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AQUATIC RISK MANAGEMENT Training

May 21st, 2024

12:00 - 3:00 pm

Virtual via Zoom

\$150 per participant

10 minimum - 40 max.

Course Details

- ✓ Shallow water blackout
- ✓ Real aquatic court cases
- ✓ Body Blindness
- ✓ 0.3 CEU's
- ✓ Certificate
- ✓ Group Swimming Policies

This training is designed for Directors, Supervisors, and Managers. All seasonal and aquatic staff are welcome.

More Information

REGISTER ONLINE
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Why Take the ARM Course?

- The Aquatic Risk Management course provides information that complements and enhances aquatic manager certification courses. This course offers practical tools beyond certification requirements to address and manage real risks and serious challenges faced on a daily basis at facilities. Topics or issues that interest you can be addressed and discussed throughout. The course is intended to provide practical ideas and solutions that can be brought back to your facilities.
- Training is based on ASRG's unique, cutting-edge research and more than 40 years of experience in aquatics, taught by two professionals who have dedicated their careers to water safety and aquatic risk management. Real life examples of court cases and drownings will be discussed. Participants will leave the course with practical ideas for helping keep guests safe, while reducing liability at aquatic facilities.
- Participants receive a certificate of completion.

[Learn More](#)

Who Should Attend?

Anyone who works with aquatic facilities directly or manage staff who work with aquatic facilities. This includes Department of Park and Recreation directors, risk managers, supervisors, service staff, lifeguard managers, lifeguards, maintenance staff, and more. **Both pool staff and open waterfront employees will get a lot out of this course!**

Some unique open waterfront issues that will be discussed include:

- Triple Vantage Lifeguard Positioning
- Special Lifeguarding equipment
- Maximum depth requirements
- Special considerations for rafts and docks
- Missing child and search and recovery
- Signage for open-water areas

[Register Now](#)

Ian Hill Leadership in Challenging Times

Thank you to all who attended this interactive and informative workshop. Feedback from this session was excellent and the NHRPA Program Committee will work to continue to bring excellent speakers and workshops to New Hampshire. Special thanks to Andy Bohannon and members of the Program Committee for working hard to secure the speaker and sponsors for this workshop.

Thank you to our sponsors: [RecDesk](#), [Ben Shaffer Recreation](#) and [Primex](#). Special thanks to Primex for hosting our event and providing morning refreshments and lunch as well as an outstanding training room!



Outdoor Spaces for Community Health

Authored by Sarah Lisiecki – Communications & Education Manager – BCI Burke

Outdoor spaces are critical for communities – and more and more people are getting out and using them! There are a variety of factors driving this return to the outdoors – people seeking places and spaces to move physically with their families, neighbors and communities; finding time to focus on mental health and a general return to the simpler pleasures that connect us to our surroundings, ourselves and each other. With more people spending time outside, we need more parks, playgrounds and recreation areas to accommodate everyone and allow people of all ages and abilities to experience the benefits of outdoor play. As we design these spaces, the focus should also be on creating spaces that bring everyone together, offer a variety of play and recreation opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds and have equitable distribution amongst communities.

Spending time outdoors is innate within us and improves both mental and physical health. When we spend time outside, we not only feel better but have higher levels of concentration, imagination and are more creative problem solvers and thinkers. But it's more than a feeling – science backs us up. Spending time outside is beneficial to all aspects of health and has positive outcomes, including stress reduction and increased well-being.

The benefits of creating more spaces outdoors are vast and range from child development and intergenerational engagement to better community health and increased home values. We know children develop through play and that when they play, their development is child-directed and based in fun. Through play children learn social, emotional, cognitive and communication skills while developing physically and learning to solve problems creatively. Adults and children can develop together through play too. Intergenerational engagement strengthens communities and brings generations together for activities that are not only fun but improve communication skills and enhance motor abilities for everyone. Outdoor fitness is a great way to engage people of all ages in a healthy and fun activity. Obstacle courses create a fun way for kids, families and communities to exercise and play at the same time and the best ones are designed with different levels of fitness in mind to get everyone a workout they are comfortable with and still challenge them to do more.

The health and wellness of a community is impacted by the amount of recreation spaces within. Research says that active communities just do better. Obesity rates are lower, people smoke less, fewer residents have high blood pressure and even property values and graduation rates are higher. They also attract tourists, businesses, festivals, conventions and other events to the area while giving their residents an increased quality of life and making their communities better places to live and work.

Creating spaces outdoors brings equity to communities. Having places to exercise that don't require childcare or membership fees make it more accessible to people from various socio-economic backgrounds. Placing outdoor musical instruments in open spaces or as part of a play environment offers everyone the social, cognitive and language benefits derived from musical exploration. When all our community members have access to healthy, educational opportunities, it elevates the entire community.





Save 75th the date!

The 75th Northern New England
Recreation & Parks Conference
will be held
January 13-16, 2025

BACK AT THE GRAND SUMMIT
HOTEL AT ATTITASH

Follow the Northern New England
Recreation & Parks Conference
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NHRPA State Conference

Save the date for the NHRPA State Conference – 10/17/2024!

The New Hampshire Recreation & Park Association will present the annual conference at the Concord Community Center on Thursday, October 17th. We are lining up the speakers now, and working on all the other details that will make this event a great way to reconnect and learn. In past years, the vendor hall has been so successful in providing the opportunity to connect with representatives who service the recreation industry. We look forward to opening seeing everyone in October!



Memories from 2023 State Conference



2024 State Conference Vendor/Sponsor

Registration is Open!

NHRPA would like to invite you to attend our annual State Conference on Thursday, October 17, 2024. We are looking forward to a great conference and we hope you will join us as a *PREMIER Sponsor* or as a participant in our *vendor hall*. We are excited to be back at the Concord Recreation Community Center in Concord, NH. The full schedule is coming soon!

Premier sponsor package: \$500

The package will include table space, logo in online conference brochure and on all emails and conference promotion, two lunches, list of conference participants and the opportunity to introduce a session and speak for two minutes about your products and services.

Vendor hall package: \$130 members or \$280 non-member (includes membership)

Vendors will receive table space, one lunch and your logo in the online conference brochure and a listing of conference attendees.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TODAY!](#)



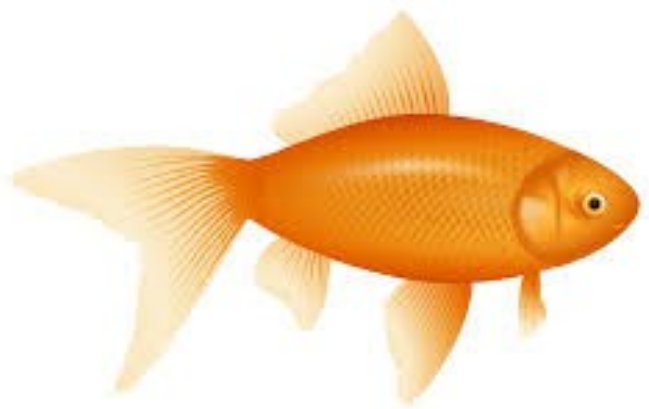
NHRPA FISH Form

It's time to complete the 2024 NHRPA FISH Form for a chance to win \$500 towards professional development. FISH is the opportunity for you to earn points for professional development - things like attending NHRPA workshops, social events, conference and for other involvement in Parks & Recreation related organizations. There is also the opportunity to earn points for books you have read, articles written and for trying new things! What have you got to lose... complete the FISH form and you may be the winner!

The winner will be announced at the end of the NHRPA State Conference that will take place on Thursday, October 17th at the Concord Parks & Recreation Community Center. Once again this year we are using technology to draw the winner so we will no longer write and print tickets. Once you complete the form the number of entries earned will be calculated and entered into the raffle generator on your behalf. Each person who completes the form will get entries based on the total number calculated from the form. Good luck to all and the deadline for forms to be completed is FRIDAY, October 4th.



2023 FISH Winner—Wendy Werner with last year's State Conference Chair Kristine Flythe



Click the FISH to complete the form!



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Granite State Track & Field News

"The Granite State Track & Field Committee is happy to announce the Hampton Lions Club is sponsoring this year's event at a generous amount of \$6,000! On behalf of the committee, we would like to extend our deepest gratification to the Hampton Lions Club members and all Lions Club members for their generosity and commitment to the community! I would like to personally thank Dyanna Martin for working so hard to secure this donation.

The annual GSTF regional and state meet will be held on June 15, 2024, at Winnisquam High School. We will continue to invoice communities \$8 per athlete to help offset costs of the program. We are actively seeking volunteers to help run this event, please share the [Volunteer Sign up form](#) with anyone that may be interested. We also ask communities to please complete the [Community Participation Survey](#) if you haven't done so already.

GSTF committee is looking forward to another magnificent event this year! Although we will not have some of our dedicated committee members present at this year's meet due to prior commitments, we have gained a new member that has already made a positive impact to the team, welcome aboard Celeste Chasse!

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Co-Chair, Donna Kuethe, safe passage as she traverses across America on her bicycle to support "Coast to Coast for Hope"! Through the power of the pedal, Donna is covering over 3,000 miles alongside twenty-five other women to raise money for the Hope Resource Center at Concord Hospital's Payson center for Cancer Care. We cannot wait to hear and see all the places on your journey Donna, good luck and enjoy the ride!"



THANK YOU HAMPTON LIONS CLUB

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HAMPTON PARKS & RECREATION'S MIDDLE SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY SKI PROGRAM A BIG SUCCESS!

Submitted by: Heidi Taracena

For the first time, Hampton Parks & Recreation created a newfound love of cross country skiing with the Middle Schoolers. With a generous donation, the rec department was able to purchase brand new ski gear to lend our new skiers. Each week developed a fresh ski adventure! Thanks to Mother Nature's huge snowstorm back in January, the group began learning to ski locally at Tuck Fields. They then continued skiing on the snow-made trails at Dublin School, played ski soccer with the WHS Nordic Team, played rubber chicken tag with the Bedford BKL, participated in a paintball biathlon, night skied in Exeter, and wrapped up with a hospitable grand finale ski at McIntyre Ski Area under the lights. Additionally within this timeframe, two of the eighth graders decided to give ski racing a whirl. Off they went to the 500+ participant NH Coaches Series Classic 5km race in Plymouth. Such an accomplishment for being so new to the sport! Considering what Mother Nature presented this winter, we'd say what a SUCCESS!



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New Hampshire Association for
Health, Physical Education,
Recreation and Dance

NHRPA Ski Social @ Cannon Mountain

Thank you to all who joined in the NHRPA Ski Social at Cannon Mountain in March. Special thanks to Eric Feldbaum and team from Cannon Mountain and the Division of Parks & Recreation for once again hosting NHRPA for a business meeting followed by Ski Social. We also had a few special guests join in the meeting and skiing - Jayson Seaman, Chair and Associate Professor, UNH Department of Recreation Management and Policy and Janel Lawton, Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development, Department of Business and Economic Affairs. Janel shared updates and information from the Office of Outdoor Recreation and Jayson shared updates from UNH. Both will continue to provide information and resources with NHRPA moving forward. If you were not able to join in the social this year hopefully we can do it again next year and double our participation!







The mission of Special Olympics New Hampshire is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.



Cousineau Forest Products is a wood brokerage firm located in Henniker, New Hampshire. At this facility the Cousineau operate a concentration and processing yard for various forest products including chips, bark mulch, whole tree wood chips, biomass fuel, playground surfacing, pallets and clean wood waste.

Contact: Jim Donnelly for more information!

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[Park and Recreation Month Toolkit](#)

Have you checked out our Park and Recreation Month Toolkit yet? With fact sheets, key messages, media advisory and press release templates, social media posts, editorial story samples, and more, this resource offers everything you need to celebrate Park and Recreation Month throughout the month of July in your community. Check it out now!

[Announcing the 2024 NRPA Annual Conference Keynote Speaker](#)

We're excited to announce the 2024 NRPA Annual Conference keynote speaker, Dan Buettner! Buettner is an explorer, National Geographic fellow, award-winning journalist and producer, Netflix host, and New York Times bestselling author. He discovered the five places in the world — dubbed Blue Zones — where people live the longest, healthiest lives. His articles about these places in The New York Times and National Geographic are two of the most popular for both publications. During his keynote presentation, Buettner will discuss optimizing how we evaluate our life, how we experience it from day to day and how to live out our purpose.

[Celebrate Family Health and Fitness Day](#)

Family Health and Fitness Day will be held on **June 8, 2024!** Celebrated the second Saturday in June each year, this special day promotes the importance of parks and recreation in keeping communities healthy and active. Park and recreation agencies everywhere are encouraged to participate by sharing ways families can get active on June 8 — whether through participating in virtual programs at home or in their local parks.

[Volunteering Enhances the Well-Being of Older Adults](#)

Volunteerism is an important part of the culture in Newport, Oregon, as it is in many rural towns. It is a principle that binds us together. Within Newport's aging community, the benefits gained from sustaining an environment promoting social interaction through a variety of activities has been profound, and our older adults' participation has been primary, both as providers and as recipients. Having a staff of one and a part-time clerk, the Newport 60+ Activity Center, part of Newport Parks and Recreation, offers opportunities for, and depends greatly upon, volunteerism.



NH Recreation & Park Association
Get out and enjoy life!

THANKS FOR READING

I hope you enjoyed the NHRPA Rec Connect Newsletter. If you would like to submit an article, picture, advertisement or story for the winter newsletter please submit information by Friday, September 6, 2024 to executivedirector@nhrpa.com

Contact NHRPA:

Mail: NHRPA, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord, NH 03301

Executive Director: Kerry Horne, M.Ed. — executivedirector@nhrpa.com

