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From the Board President
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MRPA Corporate Members

Cover photo ©HireGoats.com
I hope many of you have had a moment to take a full refreshing breath this early 2021.

If not, take one now...ahhhh! After a fast paced and challenging 2020 it’s necessary to pause, clear your vision, and to take a deeper look at the future of our profession and the services we work so hard to deliver. This is true with your own agencies but also with the role of our state professional association.

The MRPA Board has continued its work of guiding the professional membership through change. We’re thankful for those of you who participated in the membership listening sessions provided by the Membership Resources Network. This allowed a moment to pause and consider the services provided by MRPA. The Board looks forward to listening to the session outcome, discussing membership input, and considering new goals for the future of our membership. Please stay engaged.

If you haven’t served on the Board, or a committee or network, I encourage you to commit some time to support the profession and membership. It’s each of you, with your passion, knowledge and experience who shape the association’s future.

The MRPA Board and staff have been fortunate to be able to participate in a race and equity training session this first quarter of 2021, with a second session in late April. At the encouragement of the Board, a timely and needed educational opportunity will be introduced to the full membership on May 5 as the MRPA Race and Equity Spring Workshop. I truly hope your agency has provided each of you the time to be part of this opportunity to again, pause and reflect on your personal views. Our thoughts are with our colleagues in the cities of Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center who face incomprehensible challenges around race and equity. Support them as you can - listen, learn, stay engaged, accept and respect diversity in your own community, make a difference, as I know we all can.

Being nimble and responsive are essential in our profession. You may find the need for expedient change in today’s environment, but it’s often mindful and thoughtful modifications that are lasting and beneficial. An excellent example is the recent refreshing improvements made to the MRPA website design. Wonderful progress, check it out.

In this issue of the MRPA magazine you will find pieces on invasive species and aquatics. Both of these topics are at the core of services our profession is counted on to deliver. The public’s heightened desire to be outside in our beautiful park systems enjoying Minnesota’s precious lakes and open spaces spurs us to ensure their value is maintained. Helping the public to capture the sweet summer months at the area pools and beaches to relieve the pressures and anxieties we’ve all pent up over the last year. I’m fortunate to have a view of our great aquatic facility outside my office. I can’t wait to hear the laughter of kids enjoying a Minnesota summer.

I’ll end with this as I did at the Annual General Meeting in January as it still applies, but hopefully with fewer restrictions going forward;

• Keep your distance BUT remain approachable
• Wear a mask BUT remember to show your true self
• Turn off your mute buttons and BE HEARD because park and recreation professionals are resilient and our services are more essential than ever.

I look forward to continuing my presidency on your behalf. Please don’t hesitate to reach out and share your thoughts with me or any Board member.

Respectfully,

Chuck
Project:
WESTERN SCULPTURE PARK
CITY OF ST. PAUL
MRPA members are the heart of our organization. They are involved and committed to advancing the parks and recreation programming. MRPA in Action is a new magazine feature which will highlight one section/committee and one professional per issue.

SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW:
Carrie Anderson

“As a freshman in college, I learned pretty quickly that my elementary education major wasn’t my jam and quickly found myself in the Career Services office, taking an aptitude test,” says Carrie Anderson, recreation superintendent for the City of Roseville, “Turns out, I would make a good carpenter, military personnel, or recreation aide. After a little more research on what a recreation aide is, I was intrigued and transferred to Winona State the following year. During my first ‘Into to Leisure Services’ class, I knew I found my career path.”

After college, Anderson says she was eager to land her first full-time job in Deerfield Beach, Florida. “As a recreation supervisor, I oversaw the operations and programming at a teen center, working with a diverse community of youth and staff,” she states “I returned to Minnesota in 2006 and found myself in New Ulm, working for almost seven years as a recreation program supervisor. New Ulm offered the opportunity to gain valuable experience in many areas, including aquatics, special events, fitness, adult and youth sports, and even managing a historic monument.”

In 2013, she joined Golden Valley Parks and Recreation. “I started out in programming, and then ventured into facility operations while the new Brookview facility was built,” says Anderson. “In 2018 I spent time with the City of Eagan as the community center supervisor. Currently, I am the recreation superintendent for the City of Roseville. My current position encompasses many of my past experiences and skills learned throughout my 17 years of recreation services, and not a week goes by that I still learn something new.”

“I was a member of Florida Recreation and Park Association while in Florida, so I was excited to become a member of MRPA once I found a job in Minnesota,” adds Anderson. She was able to attend the state conference on her second day at New Ulm, so she got involved in MRPA right away.

“MRPA has provided tools and resources for each step in my career,” she adds. “Whether it was connecting to other professionals in similar positions, participating in education sessions to earn CEUs, or leadership opportunities for committees, I have benefitted from being an MRPA member.”
THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR EVERY TASK.

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Randy Distad recently retired as the director of Farmington Parks Recreation. “Growing up I participated in sports a lot and wanted to pursue this in my professional career,” states Distad, who was with Farmington Parks and Recreation for 18 years. “Given that I wasn’t very tall and fast, I knew my career path was not in professional sports. I choose the parks and recreation profession because not only did I want to make an impact on people’s lives, but I also wanted to work with youth and families to have them be more active through sports and programs.”

Distad’s career first started as a recreation therapist working in an adolescent treatment facility. “I worked with teens who were in abusive family situations, which resulted in a range of physical and emotional issues along with chemical dependency,” adds Distad, who worked in therapeutic recreation for almost nine years. “Through sports and recreation programs, I was able to provide them with a way to positively release their anger and learn alternative recreation activities they could participate in besides drugs and alcohol. I learned from this experience that I needed to become involved in a larger community setting to make a difference, which lead me to working in parks and recreation in a city government setting.”

During Distad’s professional career he has been involved in a number of different ways in MRPA. He has held several positions on the Board of Directors including president, treasurer and secretary. Distad was the 2016 Clifton E. French Distinguished Service Award recipient. He has also participated in many of the sections and committees. He has been either a chair or co-chair of the programming section, awards committee and administrative section.

Distad served on the Recreational Sports Commission (RSC) as a district representative of southwestern Minnesota. “While on the RSC, I was also one of the state rules interpreter for the MRPA adult volleyball program,” he states. “I also was able to host several MRPA regional tournaments in softball and volleyball.”

Distad adds, “I can’t imagine what my professional career would have been like without my involvement in MRPA. I have to say it has been such a blessing to have been able to be involved in the parks and recreation profession. Most of all it has been a blessing to not only be able to get to know fellow professionals, but also to know they are my friends. The best advice I could give to anyone is to get involved in the MRPA, it’s a career and life-changing organization.”

MRPA Race and Equity Advisory Committee

The Race and Equity Advisory Committee began work in 2020 to acknowledge the current climate regarding race and equity, in response to a demonstrated need in MRPA and our communities. Each issue of the magazine will have a Race and Equity Advisory Committee section to provide members with more information on this initiative. We look forward to working together on this effort.
MRPA Launches New Website

MRPA’s recently redesigned website launched in mid-March. The website refresh offers a streamlined user interface which makes navigation easier. The new site will soon have an online registration system and online member forums launching this summer. We will keep you updated on the process.

MRPA would like to thank Todd Pernsteiner of Pernsteiner Creative Group for his design and formatting work. Todd has been the MRPA magazine publisher for more than 10 years.

Also, a special thank you to the following members for being part of the MRPA website committee:
  • Scott Berggren, City of Crystal
  • Janelle Crossfield, City of Brooklyn Center
  • Carissa Goebel, City of Brooklyn Center
  • Nicole Greenwell, Anoka County Parks
  • Joey Schugel, City of St. Peter

The new website includes an easy-to-use Career Center page.

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Virtual Annual General Meeting

Minnesota Recreation and Park Association held its first virtual annual general meeting on January 8, 2021. The professional awards ceremony has been postponed in hopes of an in-person gathering in conjunction with the MRPA Annual Conference in October 2021.

PROFESSIONAL AWARD WINNERS

MRPA will honor the following outstanding parks and recreation professionals at the MRPA Professional Awards Ceremony this fall:

CLIFTON E. FRENCH AWARD
Sandy Breuer, Washington County

JACK NILES AWARD
Nate Rosa, St. Louis Park

DOROTHEA NELSON AWARD
Nicole Gorman, Edina

HORIZON AWARD
Chris Fleck, Eagan
JJ Williams, Washington County

TOMMY JOHNSON AWARD
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

LEADERSHIP AWARD
Dale McCamish, Rochester

Congratulations to all the MRPA professional award recipients. We look forward to the 2020 Awards Luncheon Banquet held in conjunction with the 2021 Annual Conference in October at the Earle Brown Center, Brooklyn Center.

MRPA extends a special thank you to Landscape Structures, Inc. for their generous support of the awards program.
MRPF: Transitions from 2020 to 2021

2020: A Year in Review

By Mike Ramirez, MRPF President

2020 was a year like no other. We all lost a friend and tremendous professional in Barry Bernstein. The world seemingly stopped due to COVID-19 and we all had to adjust to living life in a global pandemic. This massive alteration changed how people recreated and how we delivered those opportunities to the public. We saw rec in a box activities, interactive scavenger hunts, parking lot bingo, drive through holiday events, virtual program delivery, and so much more. With months of lock down we saw more people in the parks than in recent memory. As recreation professionals we all stepped up to the plate and gave it our best effort all year. We commend all our colleagues for the tireless and excellent work accomplished in 2020.

The Minnesota Recreation and Park Foundation (MRPF) was able to award three student scholarships to some wonderful students and future recreation professionals. Our student scholarship sponsors in 2020 were Hiway Credit Union, the Barry Bernstein Family and Friends, and the Fran Callahan Memorial Scholarship. We were also able to award New Initiative Grants to Washington County and the cities of New Brighton, Prior Lake, and Shoreview.

MRPF said goodbye to longtime Board member, John Stutzman, who served as president from 2018-2020. John was innovative and cared deeply for the organization and its mission. We also said goodbye to Michelle Margo; during her time on the Board, she served as vice-president in 2018 and 2019 and worked on the silent auction and raffle and overhauling the organization’s website. While we were saddened to see John and Michelle step away, we were excited for Jason Hicks to be re-elected and welcome new members Becky Sola and Elizabeth Owens. They have already brought great energy to the table.

2021: A New Year

With a new Board of Trustees installed, MRPF has some goals to accomplish this year! MRPA and MRPF have teamed up to participate in Board training centered around Board procedures regarding race, equity, and inclusion. We are working to enhance our accounting systems to better serve you, our members. Moreover, we are committed to completing a new strategic plan to guide our work for the next five to ten years. As always, we will be giving out student scholarships, only at the MRPA Annual Conference instead of the Annual General Meeting; along with a new cycle of new initiative grants.

Why become a member of MRPF?

The Foundation is the only non-profit organization solely dedicated to promoting excellence in the parks and recreation profession, and we take pride in supporting our members and the profession. The Foundation provides several annual scholarships and grants for our members, organizations, and students. We also provide support for professionals seeking continuing education opportunities by providing grants. Organizations who are trying to develop new initiatives are eligible for financial support to start the programs. Student members in a recreation field are encouraged to apply for the scholarship opportunities. Most of all, the Foundation’s primary objective is to support the education, innovation, and training for all members in our profession!

For $25 you can become a member of MRPF and be eligible for these programs and the benefits they bring to your state, your community, your department, and your profession.

The Foundation is the only non-profit organization solely dedicated to promoting excellence in the parks and recreation profession, and we take pride in supporting our members and the profession.

Visit www.mnrpf.org to learn more and to become a member.

DONATING TO MRPF HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER!

2. Designate Minnesota Recreation and Park Foundation as your beneficiary.

A portion of your online purchase proceeds will automatically go to MRPF!
Submit your best photos!

ONE RANDOM PHOTO CONTRIBUTOR WILL WIN A 2021 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION!

Photo Categories:
- Parks & Playgrounds
- Recreation & Programming
- Trails, Nature & Conservation

Grab your camera or cell phone! We want to see your best programming and site photos. One lucky MRPA member’s entry will be drawn at random to win a 2021 MRPA Annual Conference registration. Plus, a panel of professional photographers will review all photos submitted and choose three photos from each category to be featured in the Summer 2021 issue of MRPA’s MINNESOTA magazine.

Photos taken between January 1, 2020 and June 7, 2021 (5 p.m. CST) are eligible. Questions? Contact Todd Pernsteiner at todd@pernsteiner.com or (952) 841-1111.

Entries are due by June 7, 2021. Winner will be notified by June 8, 2021.

See rules and submission info at www.bit.ly/MRPAPhotoAlbum
AQUATICS
Making a Splash
After three years without a pool, the City of New Hope will be back this summer with a brand new aquatic facility. New Hope can’t wait to get its community swimming again. It has been a long process to get to today.

In 2017, the New Hope City Council approved plans to develop a new city hall and police department facility. The location of the new construction was to be where the City’s 50-year old outdoor pool currently sat. Two resident committees were immediately formed to assist and guide the planning process for a new outdoor pool and other displaced park amenities.

Throughout 2017, committee planning meetings were held, including an open house and a listening session. In December 2017, the council discussed the resident committee recommendations and expressed a preferred pool option if additional funding could be received in state bond funding to expand the pool from 25-yards to 50-meters.

In May 2018, notice was received that $2 million in funding from the state was approved. Planning and design took place through the summer and fall, and in December 2018, the city council authorized the advertisement of bids for the projects, which included an aquatic park, outdoor performance center, skate park and another contract for the parking lots, trails and park landscaping. The contracts were awarded in March 2019 and construction started in April.

In early 2020, due to weather delays experienced in 2019 staff was prompted to plan for a phased aquatic park opening in the summer of 2020. In early May, due to Covid-19, staff and council made the difficult decision to postpone the opening until June 2021.

The New Hope Aquatic Park is planning a full park opening in June 2021. While adhering and adjusting to Covid-19
protocols, the Aquatic Park is set to provide a full summer of open swimming, programming, and swim team rentals. Programming will include swim lessons for ability levels 1-6, along with a lifeguarding course. Independent programs will also be offered in lap swimming and water walking. During open swim hours, the park offers something for everyone, including a zero-depth entry pool for little ones.

The Aquatic Park will also feature a customizable WIBIT obstacle course. Other key elements that the facility has to offer are: a 50-meter, 8 lap pool; kiddie play structures; basketball hoops; a vortex pool and current channel; two tower water slides; 1 drop slide; ropes course with floatables; 1- and 3-meter diving boards.

The New Hope Aquatic Park has been working closely with our local swimming organizations including the NHCP Swim Club. The NHCP Club will be able to utilize our 50-meter pool for two of their swim meets in June and one weekend championship meet in July. The team will be practicing most days early in the morning before any other pool programming begins.

With only a short time before opening day, season passes are already selling fast and classes are filling up. New Hope is excited to showcase what the new facility has to offer this summer.
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For decades, Foster Arend Park has served the Rochester, Minn. community with a free source of waterfront entertainment. But through various community engagement efforts, residents raised concerns about the lack of aquatics-based recreation. The city’s parks and recreation division determined that a large-scale commercial water park was simply not feasible, so they began looking for less-expensive alternatives that wouldn’t compromise on fun.

The answer? A public-private inflatable water park venture nestled off the shores of Foster Arend Beach. The City of Rochester owns the beach, and a third-party concessionaire, Water Parks of Minnesota LLC, operates the facility.

“We heard from community members about an interest in more aquatic recreation options in Rochester. The opportunity to bring in Water Parks of Minnesota to provide an additional summer aquatics option was one way to address that community desire,” said Ben Boldt, recreation supervisor for Rochester Parks & Recreation.

After discussing options for the floating aquatic park, a custom-designed Aquaglide Aquapark 75 system was created by Commercial Recreation Specialists. The layout offers a circuit configuration with multiple routes and
activity zones to allow for constant play throughout the course – and, of course – constant fun.

Caleb Owens, owner and operator of Water Parks of Minnesota, is a native of the Rochester area, growing up in Austin, Minn. He felt strongly about bringing something positive back to his hometown area, and what better way to do that than with an exciting and engaging water-based recreational facility. He commented, “People come into town because they hear about it. They’re willing to drive to this area to try out something new.”

“The partnership with Water Parks of Minnesota has been a benefit to our park system. We have seen Rochester residents as well as visitors take advantage of this recreational opportunity along with other amenities at Foster Arend Beach,” said Boldt. In addition to the inflatables, the park offers stand-up paddle boarding, a beach and swimming area, volleyball courts, trails, shelters, and rentable space. It’s the perfect one-stop destination to escape the summer heat.

Boldt is happy the city was able to give the community such a popular recreational outlet. “The inflatable water park at Foster Arend Park provides a fun water feature and another summertime outdoor aquatics option for our community.”

Since opening in June 2018, the park had been popular throughout the 2018 and 2019 seasons. The 2020 season was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, but the inflatable water park is set to open back up again this summer.

We spoke to Valerie Klein from Commercial Recreation Specialists about what makes for a good inflatable aquatic park. Here’s what she said...

Q: How durable are inflatable products? What happens to them in a storm? Are they easy to repair?

Our Aquaglide products are very durable and can last through storms, but common sense is important. Inflatable can be half-way deflated or even removed from the water if necessary. Storm damage is rare, 99-percent of the time Minnesota won’t have winds or a storm that would be of concern. Yes, inflatables can be repaired, but the simplicity or complexity of the task depends on the type of repair required.

Q: How are water inflatables anchored?

A: There are several types of anchor systems, the most common of which uses concrete forms for anchors. The anchor lines we recommend have some flexible characteristics built into be able to accommodate water depth fluctuations and waves.

Q: How long does it take to install an inflatable water park?

It depends on the park size and site characteristics, such as water depth, water depth fluctuations, water quality and other variables. Initial installations range from one to five days with an experienced crew.
Tragedy Inspires Change for Good

Abbey’s Hope Charitable Foundation Works to Improve Pool Safety

By Alison Petri, Program Manager, Abbey’s Hope Foundation

In June of 2007, six-year old Abigail Taylor suffered a horrific injury while swimming in a public pool. That injury ultimately took her life. Abbey was playing in a wading pool when she unknowingly sat on a drain that was poorly maintained and unequipped with the appropriate safety devices. The powerful suction of the pool eviscerated Abbey. Her small intestine was ripped from her body. The serious injury was followed by nine months of medical care, including 16 different surgeries, many organ transplants, several infections and many, many nights spent in a hospital bed. Despite the best medical care and attention, Abbey died.

Abbey’s hope was that no child should ever suffer like she did as a result of an improperly maintained pool. In her memory and in response to their daughter’s stated wish, her parents, Scott and Katey Taylor, established the Abbey’s Hope Charitable Foundation. The Foundation works every day to make sure that all pools, both public and private, are safe.

Since the Foundation’s inception, it has helped the Minnesota State Legislature craft and pass the Abigail Taylor Pool & Spa Safety Act that requires all public pools in the state to be equipped with safety devices that help prevent entrapments and eviscerations. The Foundation has also worked with the United States Congress to pass the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act (VGB), which does for the nation’s public pools what the Abigail Taylor Pool & Spa Safety Act does for Minnesota pools.

The law requires manufacturers of anti-entrapment drain covers to provide a “life span” for each cover. The expiration date is required because pool chemicals, UV rays and ordinary wear and tear can break down the plastic and screws. Drains, overtime or past their expiration dates, can become ineffective or easily break, making them a life-threatening danger to any child in the pool.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there has not been a single death in a public pool or spa due to entrapment, entanglement, or evisceration since VGB went into effect. In order to continue preventing preventable deaths, Abbey’s Hope recommends that drain covers be replaced as pools are maintained during the off-season. Public pool and spa operators should replace expired drain covers even if they look fine.

Today, several years after Abbey’s tragic death and after the passage of VGB, Abbey’s Hope continues to work to prevent the preventable. To that end, Abbey’s Hope wants to remind parents, caregivers and pool and spa owners and operators that they too play an important role in protecting kids from drowning and entrapments:

- **Teach swimming and lifesaving skills** - Make sure children know how to swim, float, tread water and get in and out of the pool safely. The importance of swimming lessons in saving lives cannot be overstated.

- **Learn CPR** - Cardiac arrests are more common than you think, and they can happen at anytime and any place, including public or private pools due to a near-drowning. There are approximately 383,000 cardiac arrests each year, and 88% of them happen at home. Why risk being ill prepared if the tragic happened to someone right in front of your eyes?

Effective bystanders, hands-only, CPR provided immediately after a sudden cardiac arrest can triple a victim’s chance of survival. Hands-only CPR (CPR with just chest compressions) has been proven to be as effective as CPR with breaths in treating adult cardiac arrest victims. Parents should take classes in first aid as well.

- **Install barriers** - An average of 280 children under the age of five drown each year in swimming pools, and far too many of those deaths are in inexpensive, inflatable pools that have been incorrectly deemed less dangerous than pools with a “deep end.”

Inflatable pools that are about 2-feet deep can cost as little as $50, and larger pools that are up to 4-feet deep and 18-feet wide can cost under $400. The price makes these pools easily accessible to parents and the low barrier to entry makes them easily accessible to children. The sides of
inflatable pools are flexible, often slanted and low, making it easy for a child to quickly climb in without supervision.

All backyard pools should be fenced on all sides with a four-to-five foot high fence. Gates should be self-latching and locking. Spas and hot tubs should be covered and locked when not in use.

Avoid dangerous drains - If loose, missing or broken drain covers are spotted, pool or spa operators should be notified immediately. Tie up long hair or secure hair with a swim cap. Warn children to stay away from drains or other openings.

Be vigilant - Make sure an adult is watching children in the pool, spa and open bodies of water at all times.

Abbey’s Hope strongly recommends that parents share water supervision responsibilities with other parents, which is why the foundation created the “Water Watchdog Tag” system. The supervising parent or adult wears the “Water Watchdog Tag” until he or she passes the responsibility and the tag on the next parent or adult.

To receive a free Water Watchdog tag, go to AbbeysHope.org and sign the pledge to protect children. Together, with the proper education and safety precautions, we can prevent the preventable.

Find out more about Abbey’s Hope at http://abbeyshope.org. Or reach out to Alison Petri, Abbey’s Hope Program Manager at alison@abbeyshope.org.

Abbey’s Hope: Abbey’s Hope Charitable Foundation is a Minnesota nonprofit organization named after Abbey Taylor, the Edina, Minn., 6-year-old who died in 2008 as a result of injuries sustained in an improperly maintained pool drain cover.

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The adult wearing the tag pledges:

• To maintain constant visual contact with the children in the designated group (even if a lifeguard is present).
• Not to drink alcohol, use a phone, socialize or read while watching children.
• To keep a phone near the water for emergency purposes.
• Remain by the water until relieved by a new Water Watchdog.

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Swimming, like walking, hiking, running, and cycling, is a critical healthy activity within our communities. Swimming does not require direct contact between teammates or coaches and social distancing can be maintained throughout practice. As with all exercise and activity at this time, swimming must comply with standards for social distancing and safety within aquatic facilities. We know, with collaboration between USA Swimming coaches, public health officials, and facility operators we can create safe plans for using aquatic facilities to promote physical and mental health opportunities compliant with public health directives.

The CDC has indicated that there is no evidence the disease spreads through treated water. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should inactivate the virus in the water. Furthermore, the CDC has stated that there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of recreational waters. Follow safe swimming practices along with social distancing and everyday preventative actions to protect yourself.

The CDC has not mandated occupancy restrictions, but rather that practices and events must allow staff and swimmers to stay at least 6’ apart from those they don’t live with, both in and out of the water, by providing:

- **Physical cues or guides**, such as lane lines in the water or chairs and tables on the deck.
- **Visual cues**, such as tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks.
- **Signs**. The following diagrams represent athletes maintaining over 6’ of distancing both while they are at rest and swimming (for example, having four to eight kids per lane in 50-meter pools).

To view the entire **Facility Re-Opening Messaging and Planning** document and see all diagrams that represent athletes maintaining over 6’ of distancing both while they are at rest and swimming, visit [www.bit.ly/USASwimmingDocs](http://www.bit.ly/USASwimmingDocs)
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Stanley Eddy Park Reserve
Habitat Restoration and Management

By Marc Mattice, Wright County Parks

Wright County Parks and Recreation Department recently planned a five-year habitat restoration and management project that includes site preparation, undesirable wood species removal, vegetative restoration, an establishment period, and management of various habitat types totaling nearly 180 acres at Stanley Eddy Park Reserve, near French Lake, Minn. The plan become reality in 2020 with the first phase of the project being completed.

This project provides for practices and procedures to restore and manage roughly 180 acres of Stanley Eddy Park Reserve. Forest, prairie, and meadow plant communities have been designated. Each designated plant community has been identified to contain species that are invasive, or otherwise not conducive to the overall management goals.

The removal of such species require a phased approach over a five-year period. Along with invasive species removal and control, will come the addition of native seed mixes and planted materials in highly degraded locations throughout the property. High-quality woodland and wetland communities throughout the property were left out of this initial management plan; however, these areas will be monitored and managed for invasive species as needed.

**Seven target plant communities were identified:**

1. Forest Restoration
2. Forest Screening
3. Forest Management
4. Forest Clearing
5. Prairie Restoration
6. Open Meadow Management
7. Wet Meadow Restoration
Habitat Restoration: Forest Communities

Forest community restoration and management involve the removal of invasive woody species and noxious weeds. Woody material is treated and left standing to decompose naturally in low visibility areas. Material from areas requiring full removal is being chipped and used to mulch forest enchantment plantings. Plantings involve adding a diverse array of potted and bare-root material to achieve an approximate density of 500 stems per acre.

Forest Restoration Project Goal: Conversion of seven small areas from overgrazed grasslands into diverse forest communities. These areas serve as transition areas between open grasslands and existing mature forests.

Forest Screening Project Goal: Management of an existing tree line along the northwest access road to improve species composition and increase screening.

Forest Management Project Goal: Management of existing mature forest to control invasive woody species and noxious weeds, primarily garlic mustard, and buckthorn.

Forest Clearing Project Goal: Clear-cutting of two areas of existing invasive, mature trees that are being converted to herbaceous native plant community.

Habitat Restoration: Prairie Community

Prairie community restoration and management involve the removal of invasive woody species, noxious weeds, and non-native herbaceous species. Invasive woody material is mowed or cut and chipped up for mulching future forest enchantment plantings. Undesirable
Habitat Restoration: Meadow Communities

Meadow community restoration and management involve the removal of invasive woody species, noxious weeds, and non-native herbaceous species. Woody material is being killed and left standing to decompose naturally, and to provide additional habitat. Undesirable herbaceous species is being eliminated via non-selective herbicide applications prior to seeding and managed in perpetuity thereafter. Existing wetland areas within the prairie areas is being restored and managed for noxious and invasive species after adjacent restoration is completed via selected herbicide applications, mowing or prescribed burning.

Wet Meadow Project Goal: Converting two open areas from overgrazes meadows into diverse communities of native wildflowers, grasses, and sedges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>BENCHMARKS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Restoration</td>
<td>Woody invasive species less than 1% cover. 85% tree and shrubs survival</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Screening</td>
<td>0% noxious weeds. Woody species less than 1% cover.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Management</td>
<td>Woody invasive species less than 1% cover. Noxious weeds less than 0.1% cover.</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie Restoration</td>
<td>Noxious weeds less than 1% cover. 95% cover of seeded species</td>
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Combating Invasive Species in Minnesota
Since its introduction, the emerald ash borer (EAB) has become the most devastating invasive forest insect in the United States, killing hundreds of millions of ash trees at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Now, new research from the University of Minnesota’s Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center (MITPPC) shows a possible path forward in controlling the invasive pest that threatens Minnesota’s nearly one billion ash trees.

In a recent study published in Fungal Biology, MITPPC researchers identified various fungi living in EAB-infested trees — a critical first step in finding fungi that may be harnessed to control the spread of EAB, and ultimately, prevent ash tree death.

“We discovered that several different species of fungi attack EAB and other insects, and they can now be further tested for their potential for biocontrol,” said Robert Blanchette, the study’s project leader and professor in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences. “This is a very important first step in the search for a biocontrol for emerald ash borer.”

Larval EAB feed just beneath the bark, leaving behind tunnel galleries that can stretch up to 20 inches long. Beneath the surface, fungi — some of which may be capable of parasitizing the EAB — may be carried by the larvae as they develop, or may enter the tree through the tunnel galleries. Some of these fungi also seriously affect urban trees, causing rapid wood decay which result in hazardous tree situations.

From Rochester to Duluth, researchers gathered samples where ash is affected by EAB. Through DNA sequencing, scientists identified fungal isolates and...
revealed a diverse assemblage of fungi. This included entomopathogenic fungi that attack insects, as well as other fungi that cause cankers — which help EAB kill trees — and some that cause wood decay.

“Before now, we simply haven’t been sure what fungi are associated with EAB infestations in Minnesota. This project identified those species and, in doing so, opened up new possibilities for managing one of our state’s most devastating tree pests,” said Ben Held, the study’s lead author and researcher in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

As research continues, the scientists will build on the work from this study to determine if any of the fungi can be used to kill the emerald ash borer. Results will also be of value in helping control the insect in other parts of North America where EAB is found.

“Ash trees are vitally important to Minnesota,” said Rob Venette, MITPPC director. “They reduce air pollution, storm water runoff, and cooling costs, all while increasing property values in local communities. It’s critical we work to protect them from this invasive pest.”

The research was funded through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.
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Keep an Eye Out for Invasive Species and Tree Infections

By Bethani Gerhard, Minnesota Recreation and Park Association

Invasive species out-compete native plants that provide food for animals and humans, according to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). They also invade and take over woodlands, prairies and wetlands, and they can be home to pests that harm wildlife and people.

The MDA encourages everyone to help reduce the spread of invasive species by reporting the plants using an app called Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN). It is a collaboration among multiple stakeholders responding to new invasive species sightings in the Great Lakes states (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York). GLEDN is an invasive species early detection system that collects invasive species reports from observers and verifies these reports. The system uses this integrated information to send customized early detection email alerts. GLEDN was developed through funding provided by the National Park Service as part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Some invasive species are noxious weeds that started out as acceptable landscape plants such as oriental bittersweet and burning bush, according to the MDA. However due to their seedy nature, they have escaped into natural areas. Using the GLEDN app to report their location can help agencies get rid of invasive plants. Learn more at https://www.mda.state.mn.us/

Aquatic Invasive Species

Spiny water flea is an aquatic invasive species that poses a serious threat to the ecology and recreational value of Minnesota’s lakes, according to the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC). This tiny invasive species has a major appetite, which can cause big problems in the food web, particularly for young fish and native fish. The spiny water fleas can also cause big problems for anglers, recreationalists, and Minnesota’s aquatic ecosystems.

Lines, reels, livewells and bait buckets pose a risk of spreading spiny water flea from one lake to the next if not properly cleaned and dried, according to MAISRC. After fishing, people can help stop the spread of spiny water flea by wiping off and drying their gear when they leave the lake. In additions, all the water from the boat should be drained, including the bilge, livewell, and bait buckets. After draining, boaters should use a dry dishcloth or towel to wipe fishing lines and reels, wipe drained livewells, and drained bait buckets. To learn more about aquatic invasive species, visit www.maisrc.umn.edu/

Tree Infections

Oak wilt is a fungus that kills hundreds of mature oak trees annually, according to the University of Minnesota Extension. New infection sites occur when oak trees are damaged, cut or pruned during the months of April, May, June and July. It is important to remember not to cut oak trees during these months. Once a new infection site is established, the fungus can spread to neighboring trees through their root systems.

Infected trees should be removed the following winter. The trees should be chipped, burned or sealed with plastic to limit the number of fungal spores available during the spring months. Infected wood should not be moved offsite. For more information about oak wilt, visit www.extension.umn.edu

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Many parks contain invasive plant species such as buckthorn and garlic mustard, which have extremely fast growth and large seed production. Goats can help with vegetation management and getting rid of undesirable invasive species. Rochester Parks and Recreation used goats to help get rid of invasive species at Indian Height Park in June 2020. “There were 106 goats used to graze 15-acres of land in a two-week timeframe,” says Jeff Haberman, city forester for Rochester Parks and Recreation. “In prior years, it took hundreds of volunteer hours to remove buckthorn at Indian Height Park. We brought the goats in as the second wave to get rid of the new buckthorn growth that was about three or four feet high.”

Haberman adds, “Volunteers came through to provide goat monitoring at the park. This involved checking on them two or three times a day to make sure they were okay, and in the fenced areas.

Rochester Parks and Recreation used a local company, Goat Dispatch, which strategically deploys goats to help control buckthorn, invasive brush, and noxious weeds.
A baby goat was even born during this project. The general public loved it.” Rochester Parks and Recreation used a local company, Goat Dispatch, which strategically deploys goats to help control buckthorn, invasive brush, and noxious weeds. In prior years, Owatonna Parks and Recreation also used Goat Dispatch to control invasive species that were choking out native plants and flowers in a section of Kriesel Park. Since goats prefer eating brush and not grass, they provide an alternative to controlling invasive species. They can graze in places that mowers cannot reach, and many people do not want to go. Goats are also an ideal option instead of chemicals, which can be time-consuming and harsh to the environment.

Haberman adds, “We plan to monitor this area and goats will need to be brought back in periodically to graze upon the regrowth of the non-native plants, and to tip the balance in favor of the natives. Goats prefer to graze on the invasive plants. They are left in an area until the start to graze on desirable plants, at which point they are moved to the next management area.”
Remember the days of climbing trees as a child? Pretending you were climbing Mount Everest or scaling a tall building like Spider-Man and how fun that was.....

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Goat Employees Bring Impressive Resumés
Website Connects Communities to Goats Looking for Work

By Brittany Fangman, HireGoats.com

Goats can be utilized in a diverse range of landscapes for a variety of vegetation management goals. While they may be novel landscape tools in some parts of the world, they are very common in others. Goats have proven to be adaptable to a wide range of terrain thus targeted grazing can be applicable to wetlands, rangelands, farmland, suburbs, nature preserves, and more. Goat renters range from homeowners, conservation land managers, government agencies, to corporate entities. Common reasons for using goats include brush removal, eradication of invasive species, and the creation of fire breaks. Other land management goals may include habitat restoration, pasture maintenance, improving plant communities, and restoring biodiversity.

Managed goat grazing can minimize negative environmental impacts of more common vegetation management tools. Goats can be utilized as the sole tool for vegetation management outcomes, or used in combination with more common techniques like chemicals, mechanical means, and fire. These techniques may come with high costs financially and environmentally, or liability concerns that goats can help mitigate and fill a niche. Likewise, these techniques may be limited by uncontrollable conditions, such as wet weather or slope; goats can be utilized in any weather conditions and traverse any terrain.

Targeted goat grazing can come with surprising benefits. Research indicates that goats when managed appropriately may improve soil fertility twofold. Goats often target woody vegetation that sequesters valuable nutrients; likewise, their bodily waste can be beneficial to soil composition by providing natural fertilizer. In addition, goats can help the soil sequester more carbon efficiently with the removal of invasive species. With the right management plan, opportunities to benefit the land seem limitless. Goat browsing professionals and renters have observed the power of goats, and goats for hire are on the rise. Learn more at HireGoats.com.
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Prior to European settlement, 30-60 million bison roamed North America, from Mexico into Canada and from the Rocky Mountains to the east coast, with the majority of the animals located in the prairie region of the continent. Bison had profound impacts on the prairie. Their grazing habitats and wallowing resulted in a heterogenous mix of plants which resulted in habitat for many, many animal species. Grazing was one of the natural processes, along with the climate and fire, that kept the prairie sustainable and diverse.

Dakota County Parks has been restoring hundreds of acres of prairie within its parks to recreate some of the original land cover. Staff have been using fire as a restoration and management tool. The County is now embarking on a project to reintroduce the third crucial natural process to some of the prairie: grazing by bison.

Spring Lake Park, along the Mississippi River, is the chosen park for this bison reintroduction. There will be multiple benefits to this project. The prairie within the park, will once again be grazed by this iconic animal of the prairie and park visitors will have the opportunity to learn about the prairie ecosystem, the bison and the relationship that this animal had and have with the indigenous people of the area.
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Reinventing a Play Space
The City of Jordan, Minn. wanted to reinvent Grassmann Park to better serve the city’s growing population. Bolton & Menk created a first-of-its-kind, multi-generational ninja warrior course. With two routes to serve different ages, the park features a scoreboard for participants to track course times and participate in virtual competitions. The park also includes a trail loop, exercise equipment, and soccer and softball fields. The park has received positive reviews and ignited adjacent residential development.

Bolton & Menk, www.bolton-menk.com

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CBS Squared, www.cbssquaredinc.com

Ridgedale Commons – A Green Catalyst for Suburban Transformation
DF/ is an award-winning urban design and landscape architecture firm with a portfolio of exceptional projects of varied scales. Ridgedale Commons transforms a portion of the Ridgedale mall parking lot into a community gathering space with lush gardens, creative play areas, an open lawn and a flexible plaza. The park is part of a larger long-term vision to transform the Ridgedale area into a mixed-use community with higher-density housing and bike and pedestrian-friendly design.

DF/ Damon Farber, www.damonfarber.com

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Renewing Community Connections
Over the last several months, HTPO has worked with Capitol Region Watershed District in collaboration with the Lower Phalen Creek Project as they pursue plans to daylight the historic path of Phalen Creek in Saint Paul, Minn. Combining civil engineering and landscape architecture efforts, HTPO developed concept designs and produced a detailed feasibility study providing recommendations for integrated stormwater BMPs, programmable areas and community spaces, and wayfinding from Lake Phalen to Eastside Heritage Park.

Hansen Thorp Pellinen Olson, Inc., www.HTPO.com

Creating Places that Enrich People’s Lives
HKGi’s landscape architects help clients address a full range of parks, trails and open space needs, from comprehensive system planning and master planning through schematic and design development, construction documentation, and bid support services. Our responsive client service approach, blended with the technical know-how of our staff, has helped guide system-wide investments and implement improvements that have resulted in great parks in communities across the state.

HKGi, www.hkgi.com

Supporting Communities & Nature
HGA is a national interdisciplinary design firm committed to making a positive, lasting impact for our clients. The City of St. Louis Park challenged HGA to create a zero-energy building to serve as a teaching tool, demonstrating passive and active strategies for energy efficiency and stormwater management, in addition to showcasing interpretive exhibits highlighting Minnesota’s landscape and wildlife habitat. HGA projects become beloved parts of their communities and support the wellbeing of their inhabitants.

HGA Architects & Engineers, www.hga.com

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A Cornerstone of Tradition
Established in 1939, improvements to Johnson Park Grandstand in New Ulm pay tribute to the park’s traditions and legacy. Architecture and engineering firm, ISG, used 3D scanning technology to build a highly detailed 3D model of the historic grandstand to blend existing aesthetics with a welcoming entrance providing safety, viewing, and access for all. Fan spaces now encourage spectators to casually interact and access concessions and restroom areas without missing the action on the field.

ISG, www.ISGinc.com

A Space that Spans the Generations
In close collaboration with the Chaska community, LHB designed Firemen’s Park as a destination park for visitors of all ages who want to play, splash or swim on a hot afternoon, or walk around the Clayhole Lake. It celebrates Chaska’s firefighters as well as its brickmaking history to create memorable gardens, play features, and gathering spaces. A variety of activities and features combine to make Firemen’s Park a vibrant place where the community gathers to play and celebrate.

LHB, Inc., www.LHBcorp.com

Renovating Community Spaces
The new Trapp Farm Park Shelter Building in Eagan includes a warming house for the tubing hill, a large meeting space for the Preschool In The Park program, and a space for other recreational programming which is available to rent by the community. This project is the third in a series of facility upgrades/replacements that we have worked on with the City of Eagan.

Oertel Architects, www.oertelarchitects.com

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SRF’s team of planners, designers, and engineers delivers innovative and lasting solutions customized to solve our client’s unique challenges. Our award-winning projects range from designing parks and trail systems to developing comprehensive plans for state, county, and city agencies. We embrace opportunities to partner with our clients and stakeholders to create vibrant communities and dynamic experiences which connect people and places to build a better future through a creative and collaborative work environment.

SRF Consulting Group, www.srfconsulting.com

A Collaborative Approach to Recreational Design

Just like in sports, teamwork is essential at Stantec. Our architects, engineers, and landscape architects unite to deliver world-class facilities. For the 19-acre Fernbrook Fields Athletic Field Complex, we teamed with the City of Maple Grove to create a regional tournament-quality venue. Working in association with HKGI, Inc. and RJM Construction, Stantec provided the sports field design, civil engineering, stormwater engineering, architecture, and building engineering. Stantec is proud to have supported this award-winning project.

Stantec, www.stantec.com

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WSB is a design and consulting firm specializing in engineering, community planning, environmental, and construction services. Our staff of over 500 improve the way people engage with communities, transportation, infrastructure, energy and our environment. We offer services in over 25 complementary areas that seamlessly integrate planning, design and implementation. Our coast-to-coast client base is served from 14 offices in four states.

WSB, www.wsbeng.com

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