



# REGISTRATION BROCHURE



WPRA  
60<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

DIAMOND JUBILEE

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW  
FEBRUARY 4 - 7, 2025 - WISCONSIN DELLS



REGISTER  
ONLINE TODAY!

JOIN US ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA



#WPRA2025

## PRESIDENT'S INVITATION

### Welcome to the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association 2025 Annual Conference & Trade Show!

The theme for this year's conference, "Diamond Jubilee" is a celebration of WPRA's 60th anniversary. This milestone is a perfect moment to reflect on six decades of achievements and to look forward to the future with anticipation. Like diamonds, WPRA members exhibit exceptional resilience and brilliance, with your dedication and creativity shining through in the vibrant communities you build. What better setting than the annual conference to come to polish your skills, enhance your knowledge, appraise your development, and cut loose at one of the networking opportunities?

Tuesday evening is the time for that "retro" jersey hanging in the back of the closet to celebrate "Legends of the Game." But do not get flagged for excessive celebration because Wednesday is a jam-packed day! Paul Wesselman, "The Ripples Guy," a personal favorite speaker, is sure to inject a ton of energy into the start of conference. In the afternoon, plan to attend the annual trade show to connect with commercial members. Be sure to thank them as their support plays a big part in making our conferences great! After the trade show, enjoy some down time as you channel Rihanna to "Shine Bright Like a Diamond" or 90s Billy Ray Cyrus for that head-to-toe denim look at our Denim & Diamond social. This event will be at a

venue we have never visited before, making it a must-attend experience!

On Thursday, we will have a full day of educational sessions before our annual awards banquet to recognize the successes of our colleagues. The Awards Committee turned up the vibe at the banquet in 2025 so come see what is in store this year! Before attendees leave re-energized on Friday, there will be an end note address from Ali Starr and the rollout of the 2026 Conference. Neither of which you will want to miss.

Thank you to all our volunteer members on section boards and committees who contributed to making this year's conference a success. Cheers to Andrew Rossa and the whole conference committee for giving us an outstanding event to learn and grow while also celebrating our history and success as an organization. Here is to a great week at conference!

– Derek Donlevy, WPRA President



**DEREK DONLEVY**  
WPRA PRESIDENT

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Thank you for attending the annual Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association Annual Conference & Trade Show! As the WPRA celebrates 60 years, the Conference Committee is thrilled to announce this year's "Diamond Jubilee" theme.

Our return to the sparkling Kalahari Convention Center is focused on a week of networking, professional development, and skill-building. At this year's conference, we will continue to provide excellent education opportunities for parks, recreation, executive, aquatics, emerging professionals, and DEI program areas.

Several phenomenal speakers will anchor our week in the Dells, led by Paul "The Ripples Guy" Wesselmann, who will deliver the keynote address. Paul will dive into his career focused on interpersonal connections and personal effectiveness, as well as bring his radiant positivity that is sure to "ripple" through our conference and back to our roles as park and recreation professionals. Following his address, Paul will also lead an all-conference networking event, new to the WPRA Conference this year.

Other speakers include Ignacio Enriquez Jr., who will highlight essential strategies to manage and de-escalate crisis situations in a pre-conference session for the executive track. Speaker Ali Starr will close the event, promoting the jewels that we all possess within us as we strive to overcome our own internal critic.

Beyond the presenters and workshops, we cannot wait to connect with our colleagues from around the state again! The first night of the conference will bring us back to an old gem in Tom Foolerys for an evening of arcade games, axe throwing, basketball, hockey, golf, darts, and string bowling. Represent your team on Tuesday by wearing your favorite team jersey (old or new) for our "Legends of the Game: A 60-Year Tribute" theme. On Wednesday night, we will celebrate the 60th anniversary with a "Denim & Diamonds" social. Join us at an amazing off-site venue for food, drinks, and a live band. Make sure you submit any historical photos about your department from the past 60 years! And following our Thursday awards banquet, we will celebrate the week at Cinco Niños, a modern Mexican restaurant and tequila bar, and the newest venue at the Kalahari Resort.

We are looking forward to another phenomenal event in 2025. Here's to the "Four Cs" of the week: Conference, Connection, Collaboration, and Camaraderie!

– Andrew Rossa, WPRA Conference Committee Chair



**ANDREW ROSSA**  
WPRA CONFERENCE CHAIR



# THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 ASSOCIATION SPONSORS!

## PLATINUM SPONSOR

**Burke**  
PLAY THAT MOVES YOU.

## GOLD SPONSOR

**LEE RECREATION LLC**  
PLAYGROUND & RECREATION EQUIPMENT

## BRONZE SPONSORS

**BOLAND RECREATION**

**MIDWEST ATHLETIC FIELDS**

**GERBER LEISURE PRODUCTS, INC.**

**MSA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

**LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN MUNICIPALITIES MUTUAL INSURANCE**

**PARKITECTURE + PLANNING**

**PRECISION RETIREMENT GROUP**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

President’s Message ..... 2

Conference Chair Message..... 2

General Information ..... 4

Hotel Information ..... 4

Prepare for the WPR 60th Anniversary: Diamond Jubilee ..... 5

Trade Show Information..... 8

New Bee Information ..... 8

Keynote Speakers ..... 9

Kalahari Resort Map..... 11

Schedule at a Glance..... 12

Schedule of Events..... 14-24

Membership Information ..... 25

Conference Sponsors..... 26

Registration ..... 27

# 2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

**Chair**

Andrew Rossa

**Past Chair**

Abby Schultz

**Pre Chair**

Trista Taylor

**Speakers**

Sara Hudson  
Elizabeth Konrath  
Ann Moeller

**Trade Show**

Dan Kremer  
Dan Wick  
Blake Theisen

**Publicity/Marketing**

Courtney Decker

**Networking Events**

Kali Norton  
Mikayla Schwab

**Board Liaison**

Jamie Polley

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The WPR 2025 Annual Conference & Trade Show will be held at the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells, WI.

### What to Bring

- Casual business attire for educational sessions
- Comfortable casual attire for social events” to “Retro Jersey for Tuesday Nights social, Denim & Diamond themed clothes for Wednesday night social and casual attire for the Thursday social.
- Brochures, business cards and program information to share in the resource area

### Check-In & Information Headquarters

The check-in and general information headquarters for all conference activities is Registration Booth 3, located in the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center.

### Hours of Registration

Tuesday .....10:00 am – 7:00 pm  
 Wednesday .....7:30 am – 5:00 pm  
 Thursday .....8:00 am – 2:00 pm  
 Friday .....9:00 am – 10:00 am

### Name Badges

All attendees will receive a name badge when checking in for the conference. Badges are required for admittance to education sessions, exhibit halls, meals, functions, special events and socials. Name badges will contain all your meal tickets and special event admission tickets.

GREEN	Region I
ORANGE	Region II
TURQUOISE	Region III
YELLOW	Region IV
NAVY	Exhibitors, Speakers, Staff

### Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available at no cost to attendees for all educational sessions. Attendance will be tracked at each session. You must have your name badge scanned and sign in on the CEU form at each session to obtain CEUs. Up to 1.3 CEUs are available (including Pre-Conference sessions). Educational sessions are subject to change and additional CEUs may be added to the final program schedule, or sessions may be dropped. All educational sessions are .1 CEU unless otherwise indicated.



### Cancellation and Refund Policy

Cancellations received in writing by December 31st, 2024, will receive a refund minus a 25% administrative fee. No refunds will be issued after December 31st, 2024. There is a \$35 service charge on ALL returned checks.

***All sessions and information provided in this conference registration booklet are tentative and subject to change.***

### Hotel Information

#### Kalahari Resort & Convention Center

1305 Kalahari Drive, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965  
 877-253-5466

Check in: 4:00pm • Check out: 11:00am

\$121 (plus tax) – Single, Double, Triple, Quads – Includes passes to the Indoor Waterpark.

Reservations must be made by calling 877-253-5466. Be sure to mention Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association when making your reservation to receive our special group rate or reserve your room online at [wprweb.org](http://wprweb.org).

For attendees interested in larger rooms, upgrades or suites, additional room styles may be available at discounting pricing. Please inquire with the resort after asking for the WPR group rate.

A sleeping room block does not guarantee sleeping rooms will be next to each other. Deposit policy for individual reservations: One night (plus tax) at the time the reservation is made.

Cancellation policy for individual reservations: 72 hours, or more, prior to arrival to receive full refund less \$25 processing fee. Less than 72 hours prior to scheduled arrival forfeits entire deposit.

**Reservation Deadline is January 3, 2025.**



## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE 2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Attending conferences is beneficial to you and your community. You can get the most out of your conference experience by having a plan before you arrive. Below are some techniques to get the most out of your conference investment.



- 1. Arrive Ready to Network** – Interacting with others, especially people we don't know, requires stepping outside of your comfort zone, but it's worth it. The contacts, learning, and interaction will boost your confidence and create great connections that you will find helpful in the future. Be prepared to start conversations with strangers or ease into group discussions where you have information or ideas to contribute. If you see someone new, invite them to join in!
- 2. Be Prepared** – Plan Ahead. Use your conference time wisely. Decide in advance what sessions you want to attend so that you can focus on other things once you get to the conference.
- 3. Consider Your Learning Objectives** – Why do you want to attend? What do you hope to learn at the event? Who do you need to connect with? What industry trends do you want to know more about?
- 4. Attend and Leave Your Work at Work** – It is very common to see conference delegates checking emails, making phone calls, and even participating in conference calls during breaks while at an event. Let people know you will be away, and set up your voicemail and email auto responder to notify people that you are not available. Do whatever you can to keep your work obligations from stealing your attention from your educational investment.

- 5. Trade Show Time is Valuable** – The exhibit hall is a key part of every conference. The exhibitors can show you new technologies and products that can dramatically enhance your work performance. Use your time at the Trade Show wisely and plan to visit every booth...in addition to meeting new people and learning lots of new things, you could win some great prizes! Remember to thank our exhibitors for attending. Their support makes a huge difference to our Annual Conference.
- 6. Follow Up** – Collect business cards from colleagues and commercial partners and write personal notes on the back to help remind you of your discussion. Stay in touch through social media. Send a quick email reminding people of your conversation at the conference.
- 7. Share What You Learn with Your Colleagues** – It will reinforce your own learning, strengthen your team, and make it easier to negotiate attending the event next year. Ask to present the best ideas captured at your next staff meeting.



SAVE THE DATES FOR  
 UPCOMING ANNUAL  
 CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOWS

February 3 - 6, 2026 - Wisconsin Dells  
 February 2 - 5, 2027 - Wisconsin Dells



# Burke Brings Next Level Inclusion with THE NEW 360 LOOP™

Next level inclusion and independence was the mission when BCI Burke launched the 360 Loop into the market and it's safe to say – mission accomplished. The latest addition to the Burke inclusive collection of products takes inclusion and play equity to the next level by providing more children independence in play and an opportunity to climb and slide with a transfer station at the ready to make the transition smooth and fun. Climbing up and sliding down, otherwise known as the “Circle of Play”, is one of the most common ways for children to play on a playground structure and, until now, wasn't independently accessible to children using mobility devices. The 360 Loop changes that with a Transfer < Climb < Slide loop that allows children with upper body strength to transfer independently and be part of a transformative experience for them and for their caregivers. Next level Play That Moves You® from Burke's Team of experts.



*“The details of the 360 Loop create an experience that is approachable for children and helps them achieve a level of unprecedented independence in play.*

*Textured handrails that run parallel to a user's hips while transferring*

*are designed at a height that is mechanically ideal for lifting the body as they proceed up the climber. Transferring up the climber, kids can use their hands, upper bodies, or legs — whatever is most comfortable for them — to work their way to the top before they come down the slide, and then repeat the process as often as they'd like, creating a “Circle of Play” they can be part of.”*

**Bart Mayer**  
Lead Industrial Designer



*“Combining transfer access, a universally designed climber and a slide into one revolutionary play event allows children with differing mobility to play alongside their friends, without the assistance of a caregiver. Parents and caregivers with differing mobility can play alongside their children and experience the joy of intergenerational play in a way that hasn't been available before.”*

**Sarah Lisiecki**  
Communications & Education Manager

**Experience next level inclusion  
and the 360 Loop from Burke**





# INNOVATION REDEFINES INCLUSION



## 360 LOOP™

Transfer - Climb - Slide is the circle of play and for the first time, it's for everyone. Independent play is not only what children want, it's what they need and the 360 Loop allows children of all abilities to define their play experience. It's Play That Moves You.

Join Our Movement at [bciburke.com/play](https://bciburke.com/play)

**Burke**  
PLAY THAT MOVES YOU.

**LEE RECREATION LLC**  
PLAYGROUND & RECREATION EQUIPMENT



## TRADE SHOW INFORMATION

---

The Trade Show features over 100 commercial and educational exhibitors, presenting the latest products, innovations, and services to the park, recreation, and aquatic fields. There will be no educational sessions, special events or other activities scheduled at this time. The Trade Show hours are 100% dedicated to our commercial vendors and our delegates.

1:00 – 5:00 pm..... Trade Show

3:30 – 5:00 pm..... Snacks & Beverages

**Don't Forget to pick up your 3-day Conference Favor (Available ONLY on Wednesday at the Trade Show) in Booth #511!**

All registered delegates entering the Exhibit Hall must have a conference name badge. Everyone is invited to attend the WPRA Trade Show FREE of charge. If you are inviting additional staff, board and

commission members or others to only attend the Trade Show, be sure to obtain special name badges to allow them to attend from the WPRA Registration Booth or at [www.wpraweb.org](http://www.wpraweb.org). Many booths will hold promotional drawings...don't forget your business cards!

### **Resource Areas**

---

Agency Showcase – Table located outside Exhibit Hall. During the Trade Show you will have the opportunity to share your great ideas and learn what everyone else is doing. There are a lot of great pieces of information that you can share and gather from other professionals. Please bring your agency printed material such as: program guides, job descriptions, employment evaluations, sponsorship brochures, program evaluations, volunteer manuals, program booklets, etc. Please bring, so you can take!



## NEW BEES!

---

All new WPRA members and attendees are given new bee stickers to wear on their lanyards at Annual Conference. If you see someone wearing a New Bee sticker, introduce yourself and welcome them to WPRA!

## PHOTO & VIDEO DISCLOSURE

---

Photos and video footage are periodically taken of people participating in a WPRA meeting. Please be aware that by registering for a WPRA meeting or participating in an activity or attending an event at a WPRA meeting, you authorize WPRA to use these photos and video footage for promotional purposes in WPRA publications, advertising, marketing materials, brochures, social media (including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media sites operated by WPRA), and the WPRA website without additional prior notice or permission and without any compensation. All photos and videos are property of WPRA.



## 2025 KEYNOTE SESSION SPEAKERS



### Opening Speaker: Paul Wesselmann, The Ripples Guy

Paul Wesselmann holds degrees in psychology and education, is the author of two books, and has spent the last three decades giving upbeat talks at conferences, workplaces and campuses around our state and around the country. Over 25,000 subscribers enjoy his weekly RIPPLES emails; thousands more follow @RipplesGuy on social media. His previous sessions for WPR Conferences and our Leadership Academy have consistently received rave reviews and we are excited to welcome him back to help us celebrate our Diamond Jubilee.

This year’s Opening Keynote session is titled “Resilience & Radiance: Celebrating Our Diamond Legacy, Inspiring A Bright Future.” We want to kick off our 60th Conference with an unprecedented combination of enthusiasm, inspiration and connection, so we asked our longtime friend Paul Wesselmann (known to many of us as THE RIPPLES GUY) to join us for an upbeat, interactive, and inspiring session that is guaranteed to lift our spirits while exploring practical ideas for professional and personal growth. Many of us know that Paul helps people unleash their best work by sharing ideas around two skillsets: Reaching OUT skills to help us more effectively connect with each other and the people we serve; and Reaching IN skills to help us more consistently show up with the best available version of ourselves. Paul’s promised to bring a combination of best practices from his past content, and some brand new content that he is assembling just for us.



### Endnote Speaker: Ali Starr, Tashi Deley

Ali Starr started her own business to pursue a passion and a dream. The name of her business is Tashi Deley (Ta-She De-lay). It is a Tibet greeting that means “honor the greatness within you.” Prior to creating Tashi Deley she served as the Vice President of Culture Development at Verve, a credit union. She had the privilege of serving many different heartbeats prior to creating Tashi Deley she was the principal at Lourdes Academy Elementary Schools in Oshkosh, Wisconsin while coaching their high school girls’ basketball team. Ali has also worked for the NBA, NCAA, and NBC. Ali lives by the motto “Who you are is good enough, don’t ever stop creating the next best version of yourself. It feels great to grow.”

During this keynote you will learn the importance of practicing the art of honoring the greatness within yourself and others by being aware of our main saboteur, our judge (internal critic). Your brain rewards you for creating a judgment; however, it is unable to discern the accuracy of your judgements. Your brain’s main function is to save your life. When you are in our survival brain it doesn’t allow you to thrive. Your thoughts, both accurate and inaccurate, might be more vital than how you communicate with others. Our “judge” is typically activated when we think and operate out of ego or insecurity. When you are operating out of ego or insecurity you are unable to live in the “circle of health.” The judge wants you to consistently judge yourself, others and the circumstances. In this growth session we will name and claim our judge. Then we will create a plan on how to tame it moving forward.

**Sometimes it's good to be  
a control freak.**



Mindiola Park  
Waukesha, Wisconsin

©2024 Musco Sports Lighting, LLC - ADWI25-1

Musco's system-based LED solutions deliver the reliability, light levels, and uniformity you need with unmatched spill and glare control.

Add in 24/7 service and support, a long-term parts and labor warranty, and the ability to control your system from your smartphone, and you'll agree: It's good to be in control.

**Learn more at [promo.musco.com/wrpa-2025](https://promo.musco.com/wrpa-2025)**

**Tim Prosek**  
Warrenville, IL 60555  
641.670.8107  
[tim.prosek@musco.com](mailto:tim.prosek@musco.com)

**Greg Smidt**  
Waupaca, WI 54981  
920.460.5879  
[greg.smidt@musco.com](mailto:greg.smidt@musco.com)



**SAVE THE DATE**



**WPR 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
& TRADE SHOW**

**FEBRUARY 3-6, 2026  
WISCONSIN DELLS, WI**



# MAP OF KALAHARI RESORT & CONVENTION CENTER



## REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!



[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Membership](#)
[Events](#)
[Resources](#)
[News & Updates](#)
[WPRO Foundation](#)

Search our site...

SEARCH

JOIN NOW

MEMBER LOGIN



2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

### Quick Links

- GET INVOLVED IN WPRO FOR 2025!
- AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE OCT. 1ST!
- CAREER CENTER

### Upcoming Events



### SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3 - PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP									
	AQUATICS	AQUATICS	EXECUTIVE	EXECUTIVE	PARKS	PARKS	RECREATION	RECREATION	DEI EP
8:30 am - 4:30 pm	CPO Course Carrico Aquatic Resources								
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 - PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS									
8:30 am - 4:30 pm	CPO Course Carrico Aquatic Resources		Communications with People in Crisis Ignacio Enriquez Jr.	WI CDL Requirements and Equipment Transportation Safety David Anderson					
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm						Crafting the Experience: A Masterclass in Recreation Programming Chris Nunes			
8:00 pm - 12:00 am	Legends of the Game: A 60-Year Tribute Social: Tom Foolery's (1305 Kalahari Dr, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965)								
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5									
8:30 am - 9:30 am	Aquatics Section Annual Meeting and Breakfast Social		Coaching & Feedback Danielle Patton	Survey Says...! Best Practices for Community Surveys Jeff Andreasen	Park Design Awards		Silver Star Awards		EveryBODY Plays in a Different Pair of Shoes: A model for commUNITY Inclusion Matthew Vanderkamp & Damian Buchman
9:45 am - 12:00 pm	Opening Keynote Session: Resilience & Radiance: Celebrating Our Diamond Legacy, Inspiring A Bright Future - Paul "The Ripples Guy" Wesselmann								
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch & WPRA Annual Meeting								
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Trade Show								
7:30 pm - 11:30 pm	Denim & Diamonds Social: Vennebu Hill (360 Co Rd A, Baraboo, WI 53913)								
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6									
8:30 am - 9:30 am	Universal Strategies for an Inclusive Swim Lesson Jason Busack	"Yes Drill Sergeant" - How Paramilitary Preparation Increases Performance Tracy Stayton	Say More Without Saying More Bobbi Nance	Generational Leadership Brad Gingras	Developing an Effective Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) John Kneer	Leveraging AI in Parks and Recreation: A Facilitated Session on Innovation and Efficiency Akaylah Jaeke	The Secret Sauce to Successful Programming "It's in There" Tanita Cook-Nelson	Create a Strong and Meaningful Day Camp Culture Jed & Roz Buck	Setting the Sails: A Workshop to Create Your Own Individual Development Plan Jan Peterson Hincapie
9:45 am - 10:45 am	Reality Check: What Lifeguards Have Taught Us About CPR Paul Snobelen	Mind the Gap - Overcoming Communication Pitfalls Tracy Stayton	Breaking the Burnout Cycle Debbie Woodbury	Teamwork and the Dysfunctions of a Team Brad Gingras	GIS for Parks and Recreation Sam Pociask	TBD Luke Roman	Reimagining Success in Youth Sports Nick McDuffee	Lessons from Uber and MasterClass: World Class Brand and Technology in Recreation Strategy to Recreation Rachel Williams	Preparing the Future Workforce: Insights, Partnerships, and Needs in Parks and Recreation Akaylah Jaeke
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	MasterClass: Level Up Your CPR & AED Game Paul Snobelen	TBD	No One Cares About Your Data Bobbi Nance	Crisis Communications: When Bad Things Happen to Good Park Districts Tom Speaks	Working Toward Carbon Neutrality by Incorporating Electric Equipment & Vehicles Lael Pascual	Developing Ordinances and Policy for Tree Protection in Construction Areas Anna Healy	Uplevel Your Leadership - Shift Your Communication, Increase Your Connection Tracy Stayton	"ALL IN"clusive: EVERYBODY Plays! Sharon L. Rohde	Work Life Balance - Don't you mean Imbalance? Shelly Strasser
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	Networking Lunch								
1:30 - 2:30 pm	Pit-Crew: High Performance CPR Paul Snobelen	Let's Get Real About Renovations: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly Jan Gerber	Artificial Intelligence for Parks and Rec Professionals Jason Peters	Building, Promoting, & Protecting Your Brand Tom Speaks	Park Equity Index - Prioritizing Resident Needs in Park Planning Sarah Toomsen	Water Trails: Tapping into Under-utilized Recreational Space Across the County Raine Gardner & Hunter Rush	Fit, Fad, or Flop? How to Increase the Chance that Your New Program Ideas will Succeed Bobbi Nance	The Art of Dealing with Difficult People in Youth Sports Chris Stevenson	Belonging Is The New Inclusion- The Importance of Friendships & Meaningful Participation Lisa Drennan
2:45pm - 3:45pm	Spring Start Up Carrico Aquatic Resources			The Wonders of a Resilient Mind Debbie Woodbury	Managing Path and Parking Lot Asphalt Pavement Assets Benjamin Jordan	The Do's and Don't's of Creating Requests for Proposals (RFP) Raine Gardner & Dan Rammer	Taking An Inclusive Lens: Making Community Events Accessible to People with Disabilities Lisa Drennan	Exciting and Impactful Activities to Maximize Summer Camp Staff Training Jed & Roz Buck	Building Community Center Partnerships for Inclusive Outdoor Education Lael Pascual & Angela Rivera
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm	WPRA Foundation Basket Raffle & Social Hour								
6:30 pm	Awards Banquet								
To follow	Post Awards Banquet Social: Cinco Ninos (1305 Kalahari Dr, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965)								
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7									
9:30 am - 10:30 am	"A New Pool Code" - What We Have Learned in Year 1 Mary Ellen Breusch		Parks and Recreation Marketing with AI Jason Peters	Unbound: Burnout to Brilliance Kelly Bubolz	Culver Park - An Example of a True Community Funded Park Development Project Blake Theisen, John Lehan, & Katie MacDonald	Phytoremediation for Communities and the Environment Ron Zalesny	Evaluating Your Services from New Angles Bobbi Nance	Make Rainy Days Special Jed & Roz Buck	Emerging Professionals Committee: The Workshop
10:45 am - 11:45 am	Closing Keynote Session: Don't Believe Everything You Think! - Ali Starr								



**PROFESSIONAL  
GRANTS**



**WPRA  
FOUNDATION**



**STUDENT  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

# **HAPPY DIAMOND JUBILEE WISCONSIN PARKS & RECREATION!**



**KEYNOTE  
SPEAKERS**

**Visit the WPRA FOUNDATION at the Exhibit Hall  
and see all the ways we work for you!**

**Booths #114 & #116**



**LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY**



**WPRA**  
FOUNDATION



**FAC & SOCIAL  
NETWORKING**

<https://www.wprafoundation.org>



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: MON., FEB. 3 – WED., FEB. 5

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

#### AQUATICS

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

##### CPO Course

*Carrico Aquatic Resources*

**Additional Registration Fee \$350**

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

10:00 am – 7:00 pm

##### Registration

*Registration Booth 3*

#### PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

##### AQUATICS

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

##### CPO Aquatics Course

*Carrico Aquatic Resources*

#### RECREATION

12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

##### Crafting the Experience: A Masterclass in Recreation Programming

*Chris Nunes*

Dive deep into the art and science of recreation programming in this comprehensive masterclass. Explore innovative strategies for designing engaging activities that cater to diverse audiences and objectives. Learn to balance creativity with practicality and financial reality as you develop impactful programs that foster community, promote well-being, and create lasting memories.

#### EXECUTIVE

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

##### Communications with People in Crisis

*Ignacio Enriquez Jr.*

This presentation is designed to equip personnel with essential skills and strategies to effectively manage and de-escalate crisis situations in any setting. This presentation focuses on fostering a safe and supportive environment while addressing the needs of individuals in distress. Participants will learn to recognize signs of

escalating crises, employ evidence-based techniques to defuse tension, and prioritize the emotional well-being and safety of all involved.

#### PARKS

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

##### WI CDL Requirements and Equipment Transportation Safety

*David Anderson*

This presentation is to help gain an understanding of OSHA / WI State Compliance and learn how to avoid the most common mistakes. In addition, we will help define what is recommended when it comes to safety programs and protocols to help develop and keep a positive safety culture.

8:00 pm – 12:00 am

##### Legends of the Game: A 60-Year Tribute Social

*Tom Foolery's*

*1305 Kalahari Dr*

*Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965*

Sponsor: BCI Burke

**Burke**  
 PLAY THAT MOVES YOU.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

7:30 am – 5:00 pm

##### Registration

*Registration Booth 3*

#### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 1

##### AQUATICS

8:30 am – 9:30 am

##### Aquatics Section Annual Meeting and Breakfast Social *Aquatics Section Board*

At the aquatic section meeting and round table, we will discuss general WPRA Aquatic Section business, awards, and introduce incoming board members. After the meeting professionals will have an opportunity to network with one another and discuss topics they are facing to get immediate feedback and comparisons as to what other professionals are doing to combat similar situations.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: WED., FEB. 5

### EXECUTIVE

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Coaching & Feedback**  
*Danielle Patton*

Whether it's positive reinforcement or addressing an issue with an employee, feedback and coaching is an important tool for leaders. To drive real change, leaders require the communication skills that empower and sustain employee performance.

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Survey Says...! Best Practices for Community Surveys**  
*Jeff Andreasen*

Surveys takes many shapes and forms for agencies: "public" vs. random community-wide surveys for needs assessments and planning, DIY program/facility/event satisfaction surveys, voter polls, etc. Survey methods are always evolving to address changing respondent preferences, questionnaire design, and new technology. Whether you conduct surveys in-house or through a third-party consultant, this session will cover best practices for survey design and execution by identifying proven approaches, potential pitfalls, and deliverables that allow agencies to best leverage public input to help inform key decisions.

### PARKS

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Park Design Awards**

Join us to recognize those who won the 2024 Park Design Awards in the categories of:

- Under \$250,000
- \$250,000 - \$499,999
- \$500,000 - \$999,999
- \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000
- Over \$3,000,000

### RECREATION

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Silver Star Awards**

Join us to recognize those who won the 2024 Silver Star Awards in the categories of:

- Youth Programming
- Adult/Older Adult Programming
- Creative Service Delivery/Marketing
- Special Events

### DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**EveryBODY Plays in a Different Pair of Shoes: A model for commUNITY Inclusion**

*Matthew Vanderkamp & Damian Buchman*  
 Community collaborators, Damian Buchman, Founder and Executive Director of The Ability Center, along with Matthew Vanderkamp, Director of Recreation, Wauwatosa Recreation, will share their passion for community inclusion, and how by working together they have created America's most inclusive community sports league, along with an inclusive recreation program that enables everyBODY to play together. Both Damian and Matthew, along with the Recreation Department in Wauwatosa, have been collaborating together since 2016 to introduce some of the country's most innovative and inclusive programs. From Adaptive Open Gyms to a 3v3 Wheelchair Basketball league for everyBODY, this collaboration has proven that no matter the age or ability, all people can play, recreate, and compete together in a different pair of shoes.

### OPENING KEYNOTE SESSION

**9:45 am – 12:00 pm**  
**Resilience & Radiance: Celebrating Our Diamond Legacy, Inspiring A Bright Future**

*Paul "The Ripples Guy" Wesselmann*  
 This year's Opening Keynote session is titled "Resilience & Radiance: Celebrating Our Diamond Legacy, Inspiring A Bright Future." We want to kick off our 60th Conference with an unprecedented combination of enthusiasm, inspiration and connection, so we asked our longtime friend Paul Wesselmann (known to many of us as THE RIPPLES GUY) to join us for an upbeat, interactive, and inspiring session that is guaranteed to lift our spirits while exploring practical ideas for professional and personal growth. Many of us know that Paul helps people unleash their best work by sharing ideas around two skillsets: Reaching OUT skills to help us more effectively connect with each other and the people we serve; and Reaching IN skills to help us more consistently show up with the best available version of ourselves. Paul's promised to bring a combination of best practices from his past content, and some brand new content that he is assembling just for us.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: WED., FEB. 5 - THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

**12:00 pm – 1:00 pm**  
**Lunch & WPRA Annual Meeting**

**1:00 pm – 5:00 pm**  
**Trade Show**

**7:30 pm – 11:30 pm**  
**Denim & Diamonds Social**  
*Vennebu Hill*  
**360 Co Rd A, Baraboo, WI 53913**  
**Sponsor: Musco Lighting**



### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

**8:00 am – 2:00 pm**  
**Registration**

#### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 2

##### AQUATICS

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Universal Strategies for an Inclusive Swim Lesson**  
*Jason Busack*

In this interactive workshop, participants will learn about universal practices to support the inclusion of participants with disabilities in swim lessons. You will have time to collaborate with colleagues to learn more about these strategies through scenario-based learning. Be ready to share examples from your previous experiences (if you have any) and to collaborate with others!

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**“Yes Drill Sergeant” - How Paramilitary Preparation Increases Performance**  
*Tracy Stayton*

Trends in aquatics seem to point to making lifeguard training more silly and fun instead of realistic. But should fun be the focus in a position where consequences can be dire, for both the employee who fails to react and the patron who requires care? Lifeguards are first responders. So are law enforcement officers, paramedics, and firefighters, all of whom consistently drill in realistic settings with realistic scenarios with paramilitary precision. Lifeguard should not be the exception. Using structured, realistic drilling disciplines staff and helps them better understand the importance of their role and how to properly identify, respond, and treat patrons. It also not only creates a sense of personal confidence and pride, but fosters teamwork and leadership amongst the

staff. This session is for any new or seasoned aquatics professional to gain perspective, ask questions, and acquire performance enhancing techniques to raise staff confidence, readiness, and performance.

##### EXECUTIVE

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Say More Without Saying More**  
*Bobbi Nance*

One skill that remains as valuable on the first day of your career as it does on your last is communication. And while the number of communication methods are increasing, making it easier than ever to reach out to someone, our audiences’ attention spans are shrinking, making effectively sharing the meaning behind your messages a constant challenge. Get an insightful primer into how we process information and see how the ways we typically share information actually works against us. Then, whether it’s sharing data, writing a report, creating a presentation, or even just writing an email, discover simple ways to increase the impact of your message without increasing your word count.

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Generational Leadership**  
*Brad Gingras*

Working from home is against company policy. Videoconference meetings won’t work for us. People working from home are too distracted. Can millennials ever show up on time? Why are boomers so adverse to change? Statements like this are timeless. Generational conflict and misunderstanding has been present for decades (if not a century), however the frustrations seem to be increasing. Generational leadership will provide generational trends, characteristics, and habits but more importantly insight and relevancy into creating a multigenerational team that can work in harmony.

##### PARKS

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
**Developing an Effective Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)**  
*John Kneer*

Comprehensive planning is essential in ensuring outdoor recreation facilities and services are developed and maintained logically, efficiently, and cost-effectively. Learn about Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) requirements, how to approach the planning



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

process, engaging your community, and developing an effective, realistic plan to move the needle forward in your community.

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**

### **Leveraging AI in Parks and Recreation: A Facilitated Session on Innovation and Efficiency**

*Akaylah Jaeke*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed various sectors, and its potential in parks and recreation is vast. While I am not an AI expert, I am someone who actively embraces this tool and incorporates it into my work as a professor in fitness, recreation, and wellness. I will facilitate a discussion aimed at providing a comprehensive overview of AI's journey from its inception to its current and future applications, with a focus on ethical considerations and practical uses in the field of parks and recreation. Together, we will explore how AI can enhance operations, create efficiencies, improve participant experiences, and encourage innovation and discovery. Please bring your smartphone or computer if you wish to try out a few tools yourself.

## RECREATION

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**

### **The Secret Sauce to Successful Programming ‘It’s in There’**

*Tanita Cook-Nelson*

What is the secret sauce for your programming? What ingredients make your program stand out? The intended outcome of this professional development session, ‘The Secret Sauce to Successful Programming,’ is to engage participants in understanding how consistency, intentionality, impactfulness, and informativeness combine to create the secret sauce of relevant and effective programming.

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**

### **Create a Strong and Meaningful Day Camp Culture**

*Jed & Roz Buck*

Whether it is carefully and intentionally created or just grows randomly with little thought or direction, every day camp has a culture. The culture of your day camp lays the foundation for your camp’s unique personality and helps differentiate your program by defining who you are, what you do, and how you do it. This hands-on, interactive session will explore the importance of camp culture at day camps and provide a plan for growing your culture (if you like it) or changing and developing it (if you don’t like it).

## DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**

### **Setting the Sails: A Workshop to Create Your Own Individual Development Plan**

*Jan Peterson Hincapie*

Are you strategic as to how you move through your life? What is the foundation for the decisions you make? Come to a hands-on workshop, to create a DIY draft of your own Individual Development Plan by identifying your mission and vision using your values as the seed. This plan will serve as the foundation for your goals and decisions moving forward and will determine how you allocate the resources of time, energy, and effort.

## EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 3

### AQUATICS

**9:45 am – 10:45 am**

### **Reality Check: What Lifeguards Have Taught Us About CPR**

*Paul Snobelen*

In this session we explore the reality of acting to save a life. It’s not all high-fives and accolades. Even with positive outcomes. We are going to summarize 50 aquatic incidents where lifeguards acted to save a life with real data from automated external defibrillator (AED). What we learned about recognizing an arrest, the role of training, the emotional journey after, common questions and things we can do today to level up our game in the future.

**9:45 am – 10:45 am**

### **Mind the Gap - Overcoming Communication Pitfalls**

*Tracy Stayton*

“Mind the Gap” - a British term used in train/tube stations to warn people of the danger should they not avoid the gap between the platform and the train. However, gaps in our mind are something to be “minded” too! When we do not receive all of the information, we often begin filling these mental gaps with less than solid, accurate information. The result is that we find ourselves, our customers, and our colleagues at a destination far from intended: Frustration Station. During this fun and interactive session, we will identify communication gaps we can “mind” as well as tools to prevent and/or mend them. Participants will leave better equipped to avoid communication pitfalls resulting in better interactions personally and professionally.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

### EXECUTIVE

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### Breaking the Burnout Cycle

*Debbie Woodbury*

In an industry where passion drives service, combating burnout is paramount for Wisconsin parks and recreation professionals. Join us for an interactive session where we delve into innovative, evidence-based strategies to navigate burnout through empathetic leadership. Drawing from personal experiences and industry insights, we'll explore the detrimental effects of burnout and unveil practical techniques to foster resilience and well-being within your team.

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### Teamwork and the Dysfunctions of a Team

*Brad Gingras*

Teamwork makes the dream work, but it often doesn't go as smoothly as leaders would like. Keeping a team functioning at a high level is difficult and seems to be ever challenging. This training provides a framework for understanding why teams fail, but also actionable strategies for getting team members on the same page. Content includes gaining trust, accountability, appropriate conflict and ultimately, getting results as a TEAM.

### PARKS

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### GIS for Parks and Recreation

*Sam Pociask*

This session will go into detail on the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) to support parks and recreation assets with work completed with the Village of Kimberly. The Village of Kimberly has been proactive in utilizing GIS to complete asset inventory for their park facilities. They are actively using GIS to manage asset maintenance and track asset locations. They continue to expand their utilization of GIS as it relates to their daily operations and maintenance of facilities. They also have a robust GIS for trees application.

9:45 am – 10:45 am

**TBD**

Session information coming soon!

### RECREATION

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### Reimagining Success in Youth Sports

*Nick McDuffee*

What does success look like in youth sports? It is commonly said that it is not about winning, but is this true when we focus on winning outcomes? In a world where we are reaching out to the everyday player, perhaps our idea of success should shift. A child's first experience in youth sports helps redefine winning so that, eventually, every athlete on the field has successful outcomes. In this session, we will discuss how to set up your league so that success is redefined from top to bottom and every kid at the ballpark can experience the "win."

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### Lessons from Uber and MasterClass: World Class Brand and Technology in Recreation

*Rachel Williams*

In an era where consumer expectations and technology are reshaping industries daily, hear from leaders behind world-class brands including Uber, Google and MasterClass to understand how their learnings can apply to the world of parks and recreation. We'll dive into everything from MasterClass's iconic brand to how Uber became a verb — all with an eye on how this applies to the brand and marketing strategy within your agency and across your community.

### DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

9:45 am – 10:45 am

#### Preparing the Future Workforce: Insights, Partnerships, and Needs in Parks and Recreation

*Akaylah Jaeke*

The future of parks and recreation depends on the successful integration and support of emerging professionals in the field. This three-part presentation will explore the demographics and needs of new professionals interested in the industry, the importance of collaboration with educational institutions through experiences and internships, and an opportunity for you to share your employment needs for the future. Attendees will gain insights into fostering a supportive and dynamic workforce while ensuring the growth and sustainability of the industry. Additionally, you will hear from current students interested in the industry as they share their perspectives, interests, and needs regarding employment.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 4

#### AQUATICS

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### MasterClass: Level Up Your CPR & AED Game

*Paul Snobelen*

Join us to Level-up your knowledge and debunk CPR myths like rib-breaking indicating proper compression depth and unravel the inner workings of CPR and AEDs. Delve into the “Why’s” behind CPR and AED use. Understanding why survival decreases by 10% a minute, and the importance of oxygen. Ideal for CPR instructors and lifeguards, discover best practices to optimize outcomes and save lives effectively.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

TBD

Session information coming soon!

#### EXECUTIVE

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### No One Cares About Your Data

*Bobbi Nance*

Does your group have the right data processes in place, but is struggling to gain much benefit from them? Maybe you can't figure out what do with the endless influx of survey results, how to act upon the data sitting in your registration software, or how to make your performance measures more than just an annoying extra task when creating your annual budget. Or maybe you see the value in your data, but can't get your staff on board or get your elected officials to care. Whatever the reason, learn how to evaluate and tweak what you collect, measure, and share so that you can decrease the chances that it collects dust sitting on shelves and in your software and instead becomes part of your group's day-to-day. Using real-life examples, see how small shifts in what you measure and how you present it can make a world of difference in how your staff, leaders, and community engage with what your data has to say.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### Crisis Communications: When Bad Things Happen to Good Park Districts

*Tom Speaks*

It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when. Are you ready? Any threat to your trust or reputation is a crisis. This session is paramount for those wishing to understand the intricate facets and critical components of managing a crisis while maintaining clarity and composure. This session will allow your park district or department to work towards a culture of transparency and trust before, during, and after a crisis event.

#### PARKS

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### Working Toward Carbon Neutrality by Incorporating Electric Equipment & Vehicles

*Lael Pascual*

In 2023, Dane County became the fourth county in the United States to reach the milestone of using 100% renewable electricity in all county facilities. Dane County has a goal to become carbon neutral across the entire county's operations by 2050. As part of this goal, Dane County Parks has begun transitioning equipment from gasoline to electric, including both small engine tools and fleet vehicles. Dane County Parks staff will share the benefits and challenges they experienced while transitioning from traditional vehicles and equipment. Dane County Parks will also share specifications on electric models they have in their fleet.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### Developing Ordinances and Policy for Tree Protection in Construction Areas

*Anna Healy*

Anna Healy will give a presentation outlining the City of Fitchburg's efforts to preserve trees including developing a tree protection ordinance.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

### RECREATION

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### Uplevel Your Leadership - Shift Your Communication, Increase Your Connection

*Tracy Stayton*

Calling all leaders or those aspiring to lead! In this engaging workshop participants will learn the importance of connection through communication & leadership. Through interactive activities around what makes an effective leader and how different communication styles lend themselves to leadership, participants will have an opportunity to determine their own leadership style as well as identify what makes a great leader.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### “ALL IN”clusive: EVERYBODY Plays!

*Sharon L. Rohde*

Are your services and programs fully inclusive for everyone in your community? Do you offer adaptive sports and fitness for everyBODY? How do you accommodate community members looking to compete in wheelchair basketball, take a yoga class in a sports chair, or play adaptive pickleball? The American with Disabilities Act requires us to give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from community sports, fitness and recreation programs. This session will identify ways to improve inclusive programming, facilitate disability awareness and inclusion, bridge opportunities for ALL, and build a community where everyone BELONGS.

### DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

#### Work Life Balance - Don't You Mean Imbalance?

*Shelly Strasser*

Work Life Balance is a myth. In the world of public parks and recreation it simply does not exist. But don't jump ship and bail yet! Learn to ride the waves of work and personal schedules to create healthy balance. By creating boundaries proactive schedules, taking time for self-care, and other strategies, you can develop a healthy relationship between work and your personal life. Just like a car (or your cell phone) - YOU need time to rest your engine, refuel your tank, and put some air in your personal tires.

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

#### Networking Lunch

### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 5

#### AQUATICS

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

#### Pit-Crew: High Performance CPR

*Paul Snobelen*

Learning Pit Crew Style CPR involves training in a high-performance, team-based approach to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), inspired by the efficiency and coordination of pit crews in motorsports. This method emphasizes rapid response, clear communication, and synchronized actions among team members to optimize patient outcomes during cardiac emergencies.

1:30 pm – 3:45 pm

#### Let's Get Real About Renovations: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

*Jen Gerber*

Soaring construction costs operators are feeling pressure. How do you balance this? In this session, we will dive into the reality of renovations.

### EXECUTIVE

1:30 pm – 3:45 pm

#### Artificial Intelligence for Parks and Recreation Professionals

*Jason Peters*

Discover the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing the efficiency and creativity of parks and recreation management. This engaging presentation, tailored for parks and recreation agencies, delves into the practical applications of Large Language Models (LLMs) and AI tools, offering innovative strategies to revolutionize various aspects of your operations.

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

#### Building, Promoting and Protecting Your Brand

*Tom Speaks*

Learn how to define your brand, describe the type of culture that is currently present in the organization and identify the needs you have to change or strengthen the current culture. Attendees will learn that their brand is an experience, an interaction and an emotional connection to their stakeholders. Discover the importance of your employees who interact with others all day as those interactions will build or diminish trust within the



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 CONT.

community. You will leave with a clear understanding of what leaders must do and the plan they must have in place when a crisis occurs.

### PARKS

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**

#### **Park Equity Index-Prioritizing Resident Needs in Park Planning**

*Sarah Toomsen*

Details the creation and application of a Parks Equity index that focuses on the needs of residents in park service areas. This effort was developed in support of Milwaukee County's goal of achieving racial equity by becoming the healthiest county in the state of Wisconsin. The Equity Index is a decision-making tool that can be used to help evaluate both large-and small-scale decisions that are a part of daily work and can be expressed both through a database as well as spatially. Elements of this decision-making tool and additional topics discussed that will be covered include the evolution (history) of this process, demographics, economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, education, food, community and social context, health care systems/CDC, and park typology. Real-life examples will be provided to illustrate the value and application of this tool/concept.

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**

#### **Water Trails: Tapping into Under-utilized Recreational Space Across the County - Presenting with Hunter Rush**

*Raine Gardener & Hunter Rush*

Water trails are true community connectors. They are sources of leisure, recreation, and natural resource conservation as well as prime opportunities for ecotourism, regional planning efforts, and inclusive design. Water access can be challenging to plan, permit and develop. This session will explore up-and-coming water trail destinations along the Sabine River in East Texas, the Mississippi River in Dayton, Minnesota, and Baraboo River in Wisconsin. Presenters will review and discuss utilizing feasibility studies to determine the viability of proposed water trails and strategic plans to resolve site-specific challenges, visions, and goals. Through the lens of three distinct case studies, participants will gain knowledge about the challenges, opportunities, and regional successes of developing water trails and how to get one started in their community!

### RECREATION

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**

#### **Fit, Fad, or Flop? How to Increase the Chance that Your New Program Ideas will Succeed**

*Bobbi Nance*

When it's time to add new recreation programs to your offerings each season, how confident are you that they will be successful? Instead of launching new programs and waiting to see what sticks, we'll explore a set of exercises and techniques you can use to brainstorm, test, and evaluate new program ideas before you even start writing that program description. In this workshop, you'll have the opportunity to take a more thoughtful approach to expanding your program offerings and the customers you target, and understand some of the drivers and trends influencing today's consumers, all with the goal of increasing your new programs' potential for success.

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**

#### **The Art of Dealing with Difficult People in Youth Sports**

*Chris Stevenson*

People can be challenging, especially when it comes to youth sports. Managing difficult situations involving the athletic triangle – coach, athlete, and parent – is crucial for ensuring a good experience. Dealing with difficult people is a skill that can be learned and, when mastered, creates a great environment. In this engaging and interactive session, attendees will learn methods of effectively communicating expectations, the art of having crucial conversations, and other skills for dealing with challenging situations.

### DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

**1:30 pm – 2:30 pm**

#### **Belonging Is The New Inclusion - The Importance of Friendships & Meaningful Participation**

*Lisa Drennan*

So, you've tackled access barriers and have worked on creating settings of inclusion in your recreation programs. That's great, but it's not enough. Meaningful participation and the opportunity to make authentic friendships are the true measurement of belonging. Inclusive recreation provides an ideal setting for this to happen. When we focus on a child's gifts and values that they can share with their community we have taken the first step in facilitating a friendship to be fostered based on a mutual interest that two people might share. Let's move the goal post past inclusion toward BELONGING!

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6

### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 6

#### AQUATICS

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### Spring Start Up

*Carrico Aquatic Resources*

In this session we will discuss the procedures to prepare your aquatic facility for a successful summer season.

#### EXECUTIVE

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### The Wonders of a Resilient Mind

*Debbie Woodbury*

Discover how cultivating self-leadership skills is essential for personal and organizational survival in an ever-evolving landscape. Explore practical strategies to harness the wonders of your mindset, empowering you to lead with confidence through change. From adapting to new challenges to fostering a culture of resilience within your team, this session will equip you with the tools and insights needed to thrive in the face of adversity. Join us for an interactive workshop as we delve into the transformative power of a resilient mindset in leadership.

#### PARKS

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### Managing Path and Parking Lot Asphalt Pavement Assets

*Benjamin Jordan*

This session will focus on evaluation of asphalt paths and asphalt parking lots, and planning for maintenance and rehabilitation of these pavement assets. Pavement distresses, a simple rating system, maintenance and rehabilitation techniques and five-year planning for pavement assets will be discussed.

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### The Do's and Don'ts of Creating Requests for Proposals (RFP)

*Raine Gardener & Dan Rammer*

Have you ever had to assemble a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) or solicit additional professional assistance or consultant advice to complete a project? Whatever your level of experience with the RFP process, the content developed for the request is extremely important. It allows you to directly impact the type and quality of proposals you'll receive and make an educated decision about hiring the best individual or organization to get

the job done right. RFPs come in all different shapes and sizes. How you organize the content of your request and the wording of your project scope will influence who responds and how thoroughly they detail their approach. This session will demonstrate what content is needed to develop a successful RFP, how the document shall be laid out, varied type of requests, and what content should not be included. Done right, an RFP should generate excitement about the project and return ample options from which to select the right partner for your project.

#### RECREATION

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### Taking An Inclusive Lens: Making Community Events Accessible to People with Disabilities

*Lisa Drennan*

Build inclusive practices into your next community event. Planning a street festival, farmers market, music, sporting or holiday events? Start it off right by taking an inclusive lens. This session provides information and tips to assist planners in making events accessible to people with disabilities. Start with a basic understanding of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), relative to community programming and events, but how our efforts should go "Beyond ADA" toward being 100% welcoming, accessible and inclusive. Next, we'll review strategies to help prevent discrimination while increasing accessibility, explore typical barriers experienced by persons with disabilities and provide solutions. Leave with an understanding of the value of making more inclusive events that encourage participation by all.

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

##### Exciting and Impactful Activities to Maximize Summer Camp Staff Training

*Jed & Roz Buck*

Training seasonal summer staff is critical to the success of every camp program. These staff members are responsible for the safety and well-being of campers and are charged with making sure the program is both safe and satisfying for all campers. At this highly interactive session, attendees participate in a variety of activities that can be used throughout summer camp staff orientation to maximize learning and retention and create an exceptional staff orientation.



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: THURS., FEB. 6 - FRI., FEB. 7 CONT.

### DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

**2:45 pm – 3:45 pm**

#### **Building Community Center Partnerships for Inclusive Outdoor Education**

*Lael Pascual & Angela Rivera*

Dane County Parks Get Outside! program focuses on equitable and inclusive access to environmental and outdoor education. Through the Get Outside! Program, Dane County Parks strives to provide nature-based programming to youth who may not have access to our parks, natural areas, or environmental education on a regular basis. The goal is to build long-term relationships with youth through local community center partners and create brave spaces for youth of all backgrounds and abilities to explore nature through hands-on learning and positive experiences. In this session, learn how this program was developed over the past 5 years to now serving over 5 community centers with over 700 experiences in 2023. We will also share lessons learned and where the program is now.

**5:00 pm – 6:30 pm**

#### **WPRA Foundation Basket Raffle and Social Hour**

**6:30 pm**

#### **Awards Banquet**

#### **To Follow: Post Awards Banquet Social**

*Cinco Ninos (1305 Kalahari Dr, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965)*

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

**9:00 am – 10:00 am**

#### **Registration**

### EDUCATION SESSIONS SET 8

#### AQUATICS

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **“A New Pool Code” - What We Have Learned in Year 1**

*Mary Ellen Bruesch*

Year in review re: the new pool code. In this session, questions will be answered about the new pool code and we can share experiences in meeting the new code requirements (compliance, challenges) and everything we have learned in year one.

### EXECUTIVE

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **Parks and Recreation Marketing with AI**

*Jason Peters*

Unlock the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in your parks and recreation marketing with our AI training course. Dive deep into Large Language Models (LLMs), explore cutting-edge AI tools, and master AI-driven marketing techniques to transform your community engagement and marketing strategies.

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **Unbound: Burnout to Brilliance**

*Kelly Bubolz*

Break free from behavioral holds feeding your burnout. Learn tools to: Re-Route the Cycle - Overcoming Work Validation, Liberation from Productivity Guilt - Redefining Success, Breaking Free from Stress Addictions - Cultivating Balance, Shatter Deflection & Blame - Owning Your Narrative.

### PARKS

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **Culver Park - An Example of a True Community Funded Park Development Project**

*Blake Theisen, John Lehan, Katie MacDonald*

This session will provide an overview of how a \$12 million dollar park project was full funded by community donations, grants, and volunteer efforts. We will explore the ups and downs of the process, outcomes, and share lessons learned along the way.

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **Phytoremediation for Communities and the Environment**

*Ron Zalesny*

This presentation will focus on phytoremediation and associated phytotechnologies, with an emphasis on communities and how nature-based solutions can reduce impacts from pollution on people and the environment.

### RECREATION

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

#### **Evaluating Your Services from New Angles**

*Bobbi Nance*

Understanding our customers' needs, wants, and preferences has always been complicated, but with individualization and expectations on the rise, it's getting even harder. Before you send out another survey,

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: FRI., FEB. 7 CONT.

discover new ways to gain insights about your customers - everything from simple observations to creative dives into your data, as well as tweaks that you can implement to make your current efforts and surveys more impactful. With the potential to positively impact everything from equity to income, don't miss this chance to look at your customers in a new light to better engage and serve your community.

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

### **Make Rainy Days Special**

*Jed & Roz Buck*

How do you make every minute of the day a unique and special part of your program experience? How do you mitigate unexpected program consequences like surprise rain or an absent staff member? How do you and your fellow staff members turn down-time into fun-time all the time? Join us for this interactive session to learn/play a creative collection of easy games and activities that you and your team can add to your toolbox as you prepare to make every minute count!

## DEI/EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

**9:30 am – 10:30 am**

### **Emerging Professionals Committee: The Workshop**

New to the field of Parks & Recreation? Join us for the Emerging Professionals Workshop hosted by EPC! It's our goal to get young and emerging professionals together to meet and discuss everything Parks & Recreation. We'll focus on group discussion, networking, and getting comfortable in Parks and Rec! See you there!

## CLOSING KEYNOTE SESSION

**10:45 am – 11:45 pm**

### **Endnote- Don't Believe Everything You Think!**

*Ali Starr*

During this keynote you will learn the importance of practicing the art of honoring the greatness within yourself and others by being aware of our main saboteur, our judge (internal critic). Your brain rewards you for creating a judgment; however, it is unable to discern the accuracy of your judgements. Your brain's main function is to save your life. When you are in our survival brain it doesn't allow you to thrive. Your thoughts, both accurate and inaccurate, might be more vital than how you communicate with others. Our "judge" is typically activated when we think and operate out of ego or insecurity. When you are operating out of ego or insecurity you are unable to live in the "circle of health." The judge wants you to consistently judge yourself, others and the circumstances. In this growth session we will name and claim our judge. Then we will create a plan on how to tame it moving forward.





# 2025 MEMBERSHIP FORM

## JOIN TODAY!

Sign up at [www.wpraweb.org/membership](http://www.wpraweb.org/membership) OR fill out this form and send to the Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association, 6737 W Washington St, Ste 4210, Milwaukee, WI 53214.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership Type	Fees	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional	\$150	
<input type="checkbox"/> Premier Level (up to 15 individual professionals)	\$775	
<input type="checkbox"/> Premier Level (16 and more individual professionals)	\$1,500	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	\$475	
<input type="checkbox"/> Affiliate	\$50	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	No Fee	
<input type="checkbox"/> University	No Fee	
<input type="checkbox"/> Emeritus/Retired	No Fee	
<b>TOTAL</b>		

### PAYMENT INFORMATION

Check payable to: Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association, 6737 W Washington St, Ste 4210, Milwaukee, WI 53214

Please invoice me (WPRA Members only)

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

*If paying by credit card, please mail form to the address above.  
Credit Card payments will not be accepted through e-mail.*



## THANK YOU TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS



**BCI Burke**  
Tuesday Social Sponsor



**Boland Recreation**  
Break Sponsor



**Carrico Aquatic Resources**  
Conference Favor Sponsor



**COMMERCIAL RECREATION SPECIALISTS**

**Commercial Recreation Specialists**  
Awards Reception Sponsor



**GERBER LEISURE PRODUCTS**

**Gerber Leisure Products, Inc.**  
Break Sponsor



**JSD Professional Services, Inc.**  
Lounge Area Sponsor



**League of Wisconsin Municipalities Mutual Insurance**  
Education Session Sponsor



**Midwest Athletic Fields**  
Break Sponsor



**MSA Professional Services, Inc.**  
Break Sponsor



**Lee Recreation**  
Name Badge Sponsor



Resorts - Waterparks - Theme Parks

**Mt. Olympus**  
Trade Show Hall Reception Sponsor



**We Make It Happen.**

**Musco Sports Lighting**  
Wednesday Social Sponsor



**Parkitecture + Planning**  
Tote Bag Sponsor



**Precision Retirement Group**  
Education Session Sponsor



**Rettler Corporation**  
Mobile App Sponsor



**WPR Foundation**  
Main Session Speaker Sponsor



# REGISTRATION FORM

## HOW TO REGISTER

Complete and return enrollment form via:

- **Mail** – WPRA, 6737 W Washington St, Ste 4210, Milwaukee, WI 53214
- **Online** – www.wpraweb.org

Name \_\_\_\_\_

First/Last (Name to appear on name badge)

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

City of \_\_\_\_\_

School District \_\_\_\_\_

Village of \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

(Department/University/Business)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any special dietary needs? \_\_\_\_\_

**ADA Compliance:** Please complete if you require special accessibility or accommodations. My requirements are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a first time attendee?  Yes  No

Will you be attending the Awards Banquet on Thursday night?

Yes  No

**Children and spouses will not be allowed to attend sessions. No children will be allowed to attend regular conference socials, meals or be allowed in the exhibit hall.**

Check payable to: Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association

Please invoice me (WPRA Members only)

**Cancellations received in writing by December 31, will receive a refund minus a 25% administrative fee. NO REFUNDS will be issued after December 31, 2024.**

## WPRA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Join WPRA today online at wpraweb.org or contact the WPRA Office for more information at 414-423-1210 or office@wpraweb.org.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional .....\$150                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial.....\$475        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Premier Level.....\$775<br>(up to 15 individual professionals)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliate.....\$50          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Premier Level.....\$1,500<br>(16 and more individual professionals) | <input type="checkbox"/> Student.....No Fee          |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> University.....No Fee       |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Emeritus/Retired.....No Fee |

## 3-DAY PACKAGE

Includes sessions, socials, Wednesday & Thursday lunch, awards banquet, 3-Day Conference favor. CEU's if submitted.

Early Registration (Postmarked by January 8th)

Professional	Member	Non-Member	Late Fee
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300	<input type="checkbox"/> \$415	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
.....			
Student	Member	Non-Member	Late Fee
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$140	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25

## 1-DAY PACKAGE

Includes sessions, meals and social.

Early Registration (Postmarked by January 8th)

Professional	Member	Non-Member	Late Fee
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Friday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Student			
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Friday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25

## EMERITUS PACKAGE

Emeritus members receive complimentary registration on THURSDAY, which includes one lunch and one Awards Banquet ticket.

Check if you will be attending on Thursday.

## SPOUSE PACKAGE

Includes meals, exhibit hall, and social – no sessions.

Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Early Registration (Postmarked by January 8th)	Late Fee
3-Day Package	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5
Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5

## PRE-CON EVENTS

Pre-Conference Sessions have limited space and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Aquatics: CPO Certification Course .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$350 |
| Executive: Communications with People in Crisis .....                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$0   |
| Park: WI CDL Requirements and Equipment Transportation Safety .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$0   |
| Recreation: Crafting the Experience: A Masterclass<br>in Recreation Programming ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40  |

Conference Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_



2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW  
KALAHARI RESORT & CONVENTION CENTER • WISCONSIN DELLS, WI

# SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

## FEBRUARY 3-6, 2026

## WISCONSIN DELLS, WI



**Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association**

**6737 W. Washington St., Suite 4210, Milwaukee, WI 53214**

**414-423-1210 • [www.wpraweb.org](http://www.wpraweb.org)**