



# THE Review

A publication of the West Virginia Recreation and Parks Association

SPRING 2010

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**WVRPA Is:**

Actively concerned with recreation, parks, therapeutic recreation, conservation and environmental education, programs and issues.

A blend of professional volunteers, lay citizens, educators and students who are aware of the mental, physical, social and economic values of parks and recreation.

A nonprofit, educational leisure service organization.

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Tom Raker

## Working Together for the Good of All

Welcome to a new year! As I am writing this, I think of the great conference we had last November. I would like to thank Jim McClelland and his staff, as well as Lynn Watts and Bruce Miller. We have made a great choice in the new president, because Bruce is a stand-up guy and will do anything for this organization. Thank you, Bruce, for all you do.

I think this year with our TR friends was one of the best in a while, and because of us tying in some sessions for all of us to enjoy, I think it allowed for some relationships to be built and some shared programs back in our communities. That, to me, is a successful conference.

That is what I would like for us to resolve as a profession — to work together throughout the year to provide the best facilities and programs for ALL. As programmers work with local therapeutic professionals to make your

programs even better or add a few. We can be great resources for each other. We need to take the lead in the healthy lifestyle movement as well. Let's not wait for people to come to us, let's take the initiative to be leaders in this very important lifesaving lifestyle.

So, as you approach this year, ask yourself what new program, facility, etc. you can provide to the citizens that would include people who may not use your facilities. Let's be the profession that brings people together.

Remember, you do not have to be on the Board to be involved. By now, all members should have received their directories, so use them, and let people know what you want or what you would like to be involved in.

Have a great year!



# Everyone Is a Kid at the Annual Toboggan Festival

In the words of Park Superintendent Bruce Miller, "It's going to be cold, and it's going to stay cold for a while, so you may as well dress warm and take advantage of as many outdoor winter activities as you can." Taking Superintendent Miller's advice, some 200 sledders and onlookers braved the winter weather and participated in the Annual Toboggan Festival at Chestnut Ridge Park. The annual event was started in the mid-1980s and has been a welcome tradition to many area residents and park cabin guests.

This year's event welcomed milder-than-normal temperatures (sunny and 34 degrees) and 11 inches of packed snow on the sled hill. "Although you can never tell what the air temperature is going to be, you can almost always count on snow," Miller says. Only twice in the past 20 years has the event been canceled due to lack of snow. Chestnut Ridge Park sits 2,200 feet above sea level, and more often than not has several inches of snow, while Morgantown has very little or no snow.



Participants and curious onlookers started arriving at the sled hill and park office around 11 a.m. Some early arrivers helped pack down the hill and, according to cabin guest Kathy Watkins, "get in a few training runs before the start of the competition." Although there are three sledding competitions — "Pin the Toboggan on the Snowman," "Toboggan Limbo" and "Reindeer Rodeo" — it's all about fun! There are no age groups; kids compete against adults and adults against kids; and, usually, a kid wins. "Everyone is a kid when it comes to the Toboggan Festival," Miller says. "The only rules are that no sleds that can be steered can be used (remember the old flexible flyers?), and, once you're about halfway down the hill, you cannot use your hands or feet to steer or stop yourself ... unless you're heading for the woods!"

Each competition takes about one hour to get all the sled riders down and to figure out the winner. A giant snowman (approximately 20 feet) is drawn with colorful



marking paint at the bottom of the sled hill. Whoever gets closest to the snowman's nose is the winner of the "Pin the Toboggan on the Snowman" contest. To win the "Reindeer Rodeo" contest, participants first have to hold on to a hula hoop (given at the top of the hill) as they make their way down the hill, and, hopefully, be close enough to lasso the plastic reindeer figure at the bottom of the hill. The final event, "Toboggan Limbo," determines its winner by who travels the farthest on his or her sled after going under four limbo sticks. Don't worry — the sticks are padded and are held by volunteers. This is the only contest in which hands or feet can be used to steer, although using your hands or feet slows you down, and you don't go as far.

Participants pay \$1 to compete, and winners receive a gift certificate from either Cheat River Outfitters (Albright) or Black Bear Restaurant (Morgantown). Free hot chocolate makes everyone feel like a winner!

# Therapeutic Community Gardening

Wednesday, April 14, 2010  
West Virginia State University  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



This conference will focus on the benefits of community gardening and its therapeutic benefits for all people. Melissa Stewart is an experienced workshop leader and a noted expert on developing community gardens. CEUs will be available for social workers, nurses, therapeutic recreation specialists, activity directors and others. This conference is cooperatively sponsored by West Virginia State University Land Grant and Extension Service, Health and Human Performance and Leisure Studies and the West Virginia Therapeutic Recreation Association. The registration fee is \$25, which covers CEUs and coffee breaks.

Contact Dr. Ted Muilenburg, [htm406@aol.com](mailto:htm406@aol.com) or 304.766.3365, for more information. Text-message inquiries may also be sent to him at 304.610.9649.

The workshop will be held at the Dunbar Community Center in Dunbar, West Virginia. The city of Dunbar has invited us to come to its center, and its new mayor will welcome participants — the citizens are excited about our holding this conference at their facility.

Directions to the facility will be mailed upon receipt of registration — please join us.

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## Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It was a real pleasure for me to attend your recent annual conference in Charleston and to see so many of my old friends again. While my wife and I are enjoying our retirement in north Georgia, we do miss our many friends in West Virginia. I particularly miss my association with all of you in WVRPA.

I was really impressed with the quality of your programs at this annual conference. I was struck by the fact that three of the sessions that I attended were equally as pertinent to the park and recreation people as to the therapeutic people. As many of you may recall, we held joint conferences with the therapeutic section back in the 1980s with the intent that some sessions would be attended by park and recreation people as well as therapeutic people. Unfortunately, we did not reach that goal in most cases. That was certainly not true at this conference. I understand that Owen Walker, and I am sure that others as well, organized these sessions so as to accommodate both groups. Congratulations to those of you who planned the sessions so that some of them were valuable for both groups. It would, indeed, be a good thing if you could continue this trend at future conferences.

Again, it was a pleasure to see all of you again. I appreciate receiving the invitation to speak at your conference. My best wishes to all of you, and I hope to have the opportunity to see you again in the future.

Sincerely,  
Raymond Busbee

# 2009 WVRPA Conference Insight

by Bruce Miller

The theme of the 2009 West Virginia Recreation and Parks Conference, **Bridging the Past and Future**, seems most appropriate as I reflect.

The question was asked, “How many here tonight were at the first WVRPA conference back in 1973?” A showing of hands, although only a few, showed everyone in the room our association’s past — our association’s beginnings. As I continued to glance around the room, I clearly saw the continuing **bridge** that those few raised hands had started. I saw newly appointed Board members, recently hired recreational professionals and new students. I saw WVRPA’s future.

**We would also like to thank our loyal exhibitors who help make our conference possible:**

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Charleston Mayor Danny Jones (podium) and the keynote speaker, state treasurer John Purdue, acknowledge that WVRPA are “cool” people!



Newly appointed Board member Tim Barr of Jefferson County Recreation & Parks congratulated by longtime member Rick Abel

# 2009 AWARDS BANQUET

The 2009 WVRPA Conference was held in Charleston, West Virginia. The Awards Banquet took place on November 5. The following awards were presented to a group of very deserving individuals and departments.

The James L. McClelland Public Parks and Recreation Facility Award is given to a public park and recreation organization that has designed and constructed an exceptional park and recreation area, space or facility. It may be a park, a building or an outdoor or indoor space that serves the general public. Emphasis is placed upon design, whereby a concept has been articulated and followed through to completion and operation. Emphasis is also placed on creativity — how uniquely a space or facility meets its intended uses and its challenge within the personality of place, upon environmental adaptability, function and upon community involvement in planning.

The James L. McClelland Public Parks and Recreation Facility Award was presented to Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission for the Guyses Run Fishing Park. The Fishing Park is a unique and creative adaptation to a facility that, just 15 years ago, was a fully functioning water treatment plant for Martinka Coal Company. The Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission then purchased the plant to develop it into a community fishing park. Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission has since worked with West Virginia University extensively in the planning, development and programming of the fishing park. The WVU Recreation and Parks Department has helped to plan special events and held classes at the park, the landscape agriculture classes have developed master plans, and the Aquaculture Research Department at WVU has assisted through the Aquaculture Food and Marketing Development Project. The Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission has also worked with volunteer groups such as Leadership Marion on the development of the park. The Guyses Run Fishing Park has been home to various fishing events for all ages. This facility, which once served a completely different purpose, has now been creatively adapted and renovated to become a wonderful recreational area to be enjoyed by the community. Congratulations, Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Austin C. Palmer Outstanding Facility Award is designed to honor a facility that provides a large geographic area with a recreational area of sound design and maximum usage. The facility must be frequently used for various programs and activities. The chosen facility must also be able to accommodate such events while remaining aesthetically pleasing and inviting to the public.

This award was proudly presented to Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks and Recreation for its War Memorial Park. This facility became a public park in 1947 as a “living memorial” for our servicemen and servicewomen from Berkeley County

who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in World War II. Since then, the park has undergone many changes and improvements. Some of the renovations include the addition of a new Veterans Memorial, the addition of a mini-golf course, new park play areas and pavilions, a renovated bath house, a new concession stand, a covered stage and a renovated pool. This facility is home to many community activities, such as the Labor Day Breakfast, the June Jubilee, the July Fourth Celebration and various Concerts in the Park. This facility is an asset to the community; being located in the heart of Berkeley County, it is visited by thousands of people each year. Congratulations, Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks and Recreation, for your dedication to providing an outstanding facility for the citizens of your community.



The Eugene M. Fuller Program Award is awarded to agencies for the creation and promotion of innovative, quality program ideas to benefit a special and deserving population. This year, the award was presented to Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks and Recreation for its Silver Sneakers and Adult Fitness Program. The Silver Sneakers and Adult Fitness Program has given Berkeley County seniors an opportunity to stay physically fit and active through innovative programming. Some of the programs offered include: water aerobics, senior swim sessions, a cardiovascular endurance program, muscular strength and range-of-movement classes and walking and yoga classes. Congratulations, Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks and Recreation, for providing recreational opportunities to a worthy population.

Also at the award ceremony, we recognized a few individuals for the successful administration and organization of the 2008 WVRPA Conference at Cacapon State Park. They did a wonderful job, and their hard work was appreciated. The honorees for this award were: Jim McClelland, Joanna Donchatz, Bruce Miller and Joe Shuttleworth.

# Breaks Ground on New Sports Complex

The city of Bridgeport has been working with Genesis Partners (the developers of the Charles Pointe project), the Greater Bridgeport Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Harrison County Commission for some time to develop the Charles Pointe Park for the citizens of Harrison County and Bridgeport.

This master-planned park will wear many hats. Not only will it become the jewel of the city of Bridgeport Park system, but it will meet the needs and demand of an ever-growing population for outdoor sports facilities, will serve the planned communities in the Charles Pointe development and will serve as an economic stimulus for the area by attracting regional softball and baseball tournaments.

The park as currently planned allows for five baseball and softball fields. Two of these fields will be large enough to host older athletes' baseball activities, such as Babe Ruth or high school baseball, as well as adult softball. However, the design will include mobile fencing that will allow all five fields to be used for Little League baseball if desired. The main area of the park will feature these fields in a "wagon-wheel" de-

sign with a large centralized concession/restroom/press box at the center that will serve all the fields.

Other attractions include two picnic shelters, two playgrounds, a multipurpose field for soccer and football use, a basketball court, ample parking areas, a walking/running trail surrounding the entire complex and a Little League Challenger Division "Miracle Field." The Challenger Division of Little League allows mentally and physically challenged children to participate in an organized sport that is both fun and safe for the individual. In 2009, we had 74 athletes from seven counties participating in this league.

The location will also provide a valuable benefit to the community. This park will serve as a hub for the surrounding residential areas that are planned and currently being developed in the Charles Pointe complex. The park will provide recreational opportunities in close proximity to many of these residents and will provide them with a safe place to exercise and recreate. The business residents of the area and their employees will also benefit. The park is centrally located between two ma-

ior areas of employers in Bridgeport. To the west is the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services complex, which houses more than 2,500 employees. Directly east is the Harrison Marion Regional Airport, which is surrounded by the Mid-Atlantic Aerospace Complex, hosting businesses that include Aurora Flight Sciences, Bombardiere Aerospace, Lockheed-Martin, Pratt and Whitney and K-C-I Aviation.

Currently, contractors are finishing up the rough grade contract for the park. This includes the major earth-moving, drainage and retaining walls. The city of Bridgeport anticipates the fine grading bid to be let in early 2010, allowing for early spring construction that will bring the park to a state that will allow construction of individual facilities to begin. The City Council has yet to decide how the development will be funded. It is possible that the project will be phased and certain areas will be completed each year. Another option that has been brought to the table is a bond that would allow the park to be completed much quicker. The estimated cost of the park is around \$6 million.

## LEGEND KEY

- (A) Retaining Wall
- (B) Multi-Purpose Field
- (C) Youth Baseball/Softball Field
- (D) Minor Field
- (E) Playground
- (F) Picnic Shelter
- (G) Basketball Court
- (H) Steps/Handicap Accessible Ramp
- (I) Maintenance Building
- (J) Youth Baseball/Softball Field
- (K) Baseball/Softball Field
- (L) Baseball Field
- (M) Bunting Cages
- (N) Future Track and Bleachers
- (O) Walking Paths
- (P) Parking
- (Q) Ticket Booth
- (R) Restroom/Concession Building



# MCPARC WASHOUT REPAIR

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission (MCPARC) is pleased to announce the major washout on the West Fork River/Ralph S. LaRue Trail has been repaired. The large washout, located next to the Marion County/Harrison County line, was caused by the flood that occurred in June 2008. Corrective measures for flood damages in the area were covered by FEMA; however, MCPARC was seeking a better solution to prevent future problems. FEMA was going to cover replacement with culverts for \$164,000, but MCPARC requested a mitigation grant to install a concrete bridge. The funding was then approved to have a precast concrete span installed.

Thrasher Engineering provided services and guidance for the project from start to finish. They provided surveying, a site plan and information for bidding purposes. They also worked with Conspan Bridge Systems to determine the proper span for the job. A geotechnical test was done by the H.C. Nutting Co. Ray Henderson provided countless hours of volunteer time to help put the project together. Ray is a retired engineer with years of volunteer work on trail and park projects for MCPARC.

MCPARC put the project out to bid, and the job was awarded to Savage Heavy Highway Corporations of Wheeling. After the bridge was installed, the MCPARC maintenance staff constructed a railing/fence system for safety. The total cost for the project was about \$260,000 and was covered by FEMA funding.

The rail trail was opened back up in December 2009, much to the delight of trail users. The trail, which runs from Shinnston to Fairmont, has become very popular and is often used by commuters as well as for recreation.





## SAVE THE DATE!

# 2010 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SYMPOSIUM

Embassy Suites, Charleston, West Virginia • June 17-18, 2010

Do you believe that increasing physical activity levels of West Virginians can positively impact obesity and chronic disease rates in our state, as well as improve our quality of life?

*Then you need to be at the 2010 Physical Activity Symposium!*

Save this date, and plan on joining other West Virginians committed to promoting physical activity at work, school, home or play in every sector of our state to begin the dialogue on how we can get our citizens moving more.

### Who Should Attend?

Anyone interested in promoting physical activity in West Virginia — workplace, schools, faith-based organizations, community organizations, parks and recreation, business and industry, infrastructure, economic development, health care, individuals, leaders, etc.

### Why Should I Attend?

To share what is working or not working in your community, network with others and find resources unique to West Virginia for your community or organization.

### What's the Agenda?

Announcements on speakers, abstract submissions and West Virginia intervention and program presentations will be made on the Symposium Web site: [www.wvphysicalactivity.org](http://www.wvphysicalactivity.org).

### What Will It Cost?

Registration fees for this two-day conference will be reasonable in order to encourage as many participants as possible from every region and sector of our state. Registration information will be announced soon on the Symposium Web site: [www.wvphysicalactivity.org](http://www.wvphysicalactivity.org).

### What's the Purpose of the 2010 Physical Activity Symposium?

- To showcase physical activity programs and initiatives within the state that model best practice
- To educate participants on current research and practice related to physical activity in each sector
- To inform participants about the National Physical Activity Plan and its implications for all population sectors
- To build awareness and support for a statewide strategic plan for physical activity in West Virginia

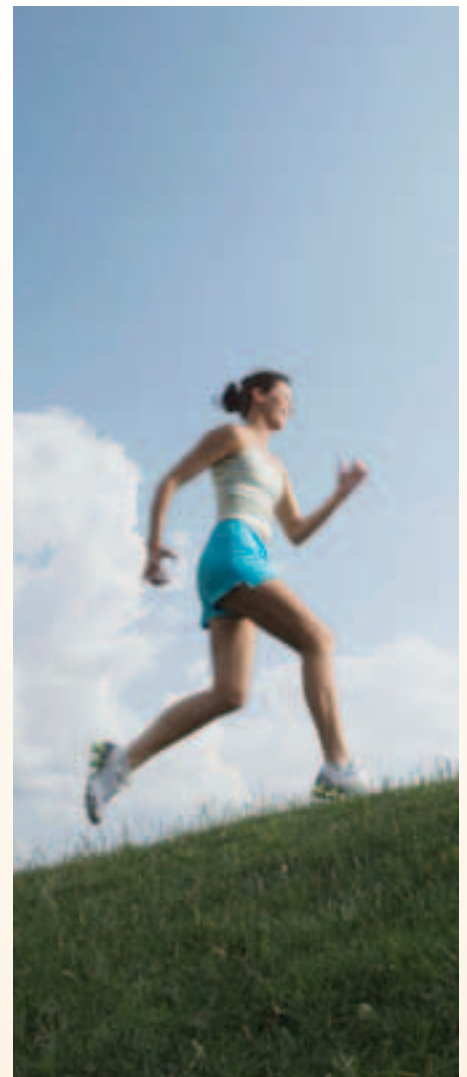
### What Are Some Expected Highlights of the 2010 Physical Activity Symposium?

- Nationally recognized speakers from all population sectors
- "Showcase WV" Poster Session & highlighted intervention presentations
- Working sessions with others in your field and within your region
- Highlights from the National Physical Activity Plan Committee
- And much more

Don't miss this opportunity to help West Virginia get more physically active! Save the date and share the date with others. But most importantly — be there!

Sponsored by: West Virginia on the Move, Inc, WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Science, The West Virginia University CARDIAC Project

Interested in becoming more involved? Call Eloise Elliott at 304.293.0869, e-mail [eloise.elliott@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:eloise.elliott@mail.wvu.edu), or visit [www.wvphysicalactivity.org](http://www.wvphysicalactivity.org).



# AQUATIC FACILITY OPERATORS COURSE

Tuesday and Wednesday, May 4 and 5, 2010  
8 a.m.-5 p.m. (both days)

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15, 2010 — *no exceptions***

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