



President's Report

Michelle Park

Recently I had a professor outside of our field say to me **"I just love training park and recreation professionals. You guys have the best attitudes!"** Of course I smiled proudly and said, "Yes we are a special breed" and we went on to share a few stories about how wonderful park and recreation professionals are and why. Later I tried to recall when I first realized that I was part of a special profession. I believe it was when I was working in my first full-time position after grad school, in the late seventies, working with Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department.

Of course I loved my job, as did almost everyone else in the department. But when I compared myself to my friends outside of work who were either still searching for their career or were in a job that they felt 'stuck in', not really enjoying their work, I recalled thinking how blessed I felt to have found this profession. What's even more wonderful is that I can still say that almost 30 years later.

Not long into my career I got involved with the Florida Recreation and Parks Association and began to learn from other professionals in agencies different from mine, how they operated, what was working, what didn't work. I discovered the resource that existed in a professional network and how readily everyone was willing to share. I recall much later in life discovering that this was unusual and not really the norm in many other professions **where expertise came with a price tag versus a warm and sincere helping hand like our professionals give to each other.** It's an honor to be asked to share information, share resources, share knowledge and park and recreation professionals give it willingly to each other in hopes of it helping each other succeed. Competition is not something that exists within this profession. **In its**

Inside This Issue

- **President's Report**
- **Best Practices in Citizen Involvement**
- **NRPA Congress Schedule**
- **Promotions and Such**
- **2004 Pugsley Award**
- **Past Pugsley Award Honoree**

place are compassion, friendship, warmth and a genuine sincerity for each other's success and happiness. Something else that makes park and recreation professionals unique.

What started this story was the professor I've been working with from Cleveland State University, an expert in criminal studies, who has developed a training program for juvenile court officers and park and recreation professionals entitled "Working Effectively with Girls." Her name is Dr. Dana Hubbard and the training program is designed for teams of probation officers and park and recreation professionals from the same community, working together to develop programs for girls in an effort to get them involved in positive experiences before they get into the court system, or while they're in the court system or after they get out of a correctional facility as they re-enter society.

Unfortunately, there is an incredibly high number of girls entering the court system, more than at any other time in our history. And they are entering a court system that is designed for boys primarily because girls juvenile incidents were always far fewer than boys. This is changing. To address this problem in Ohio, we've created The Girls Institute of Ohio and for the past 3 years I've been the executive director of the Institute as an

outreach program of the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association.

Working with corrections and juvenile officers has been a new experience for me. When we bring together park and recreation professionals with court officials in these training programs, it's like night and day. With some exceptions, most court officials are not very excited about their jobs. It is hard to be excited when working with such sad, hard core cases - kids who have been on their own since age 6 or doing drugs with their parents since age 10. Stories that make your skin crawl and your eyes tear up.

It's in this vein that the professor made the comment to me about the attitude of park and recreation professionals. **She had never been exposed to such positive people who cared so deeply about their communities and want so desperately to make a difference.** The 'can do attitude' that our professionals have even with little to no resources just exudes during these training programs. I think this attitude is perhaps one of our greatest strengths. In this case, the positive attitude of our professionals is uplifting and bringing hope to a juvenile court profession who have already given up or are on the verge of giving up on these kids.

So in closing, this is a story to remind each of you how special you are and how vital the work you are doing is to your community whether your community is national parks, state parks, local parks or preparing future park and recreation professionals to take over for us. **Remember that it's the positive 'can do' attitude that separates you from other professions in your community.** It's what makes you special!

Thanks for the special gifts you bring to the Academy that impact this important profession. According to Dr. Dana Hubbard, Cleveland State University, "You guys have the best attitudes!"

Best practices in Citizen Involvement

NRPA's Citizen Involvement Task Force asked the Academy to assist in efforts to:

1. Increase and enhance citizen involvement in parks and recreation and NRPA.
2. Identify ways to create better understanding, support, and appreciation for citizen involvement from professionals
3. Identify ways professionals can provide leadership to the effort to recruit citizen advocates to support legislative initiatives of NRPA

To address this request, the Academy CITF has decided to prepare a best practices piece related to involving citizens at the local level. The focus is to share with professionals some practical ways to proactively involve citizens as advocates.

We need your help in gathering information. Please consider the following (and other items that we may have overlooked) to share your own agency's experience or that of others you're aware of:

- Programming (adding new programs to meet community needs)
- Facility development (skate parks, recreation centers, etc.)
- Special interest (such as horse trails, ORV, etc)
- Financial support (park foundations, friends groups, individuals, business)
- Advocacy (getting local or state legislation passed)

Regarding these, please provide the following and other pertinent information:

- Description of the program, project, event, or effort
- Partnerships initiated or formed
- How was the citizen involvement initiated and mobilized?
- What was the staff involvement?
- What 3 key lessons did the P&R Department learn from this?

- What methods did you use to recognize your citizen volunteers?

If pertinent, please address the following:

- What process did you use to educate citizen advocates about the necessity of pursuing funding to take care of what you have currently rather than new projects?
- What process did you use to ensure that your supporters are advocates for the same projects that your agency is most in need of?

Please return this information (electronically to the extent possible, please) to Linda Kotowski at lkotowsk@auroragov.org no later than June 17, 2005.

Thanks for your help!

NRPA Congress Schedule

Mark your calendars for the following events related to Academy activities during the NRPA Congress in San Antonio.

- Board Meeting, 7:00 – 9:30 AM, Thursday, October 20
- New Member Orientation, 9:45 – 10:45 AM, Thursday, October 20
- General Membership Meeting, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM, Thursday, October 20
- Banquet, evening of Thursday, October 20
- JPRA Associate Editors, 8:00 - 9:30 AM, Friday, October 21

Promotions and Such

- Becky Benna is the new director in Glendale, AZ
- Steve Messerli is the new director of the Fox Valley Park District, IL
- Ron Olson has a new position as Chief, Parks and Recreation Division, Michigan Dept of Natural Resources
- Andrew Kimmel has been named as Deputy

Executive Director of the Lake County Forest Preserve District



Andy Kimmel
Deputy Executive Director
Lake County Forest Preserve District

2004 Pugsley Award

The national level Pugsley Medal for 2004 was awarded to Mr. Laurance Rockefeller. Mr. Rockefeller was perhaps the most influential figure in the parks and conservation field in the latter half of the Twentieth Century. The Rockefeller family has a tradition of not accepting personal awards, but when Mr. Rockefeller was approached by Nash Castro and Gordon Skea to see if he would be willing to be nominated, he reviewed the pedigree of the Pugsley Medal and agreed. Unfortunately, he died in the summer of 2004 before the award could be conferred. At the Pugsley banquet in Reno, Mr. Bob Stanton, former NPS director, spoke eloquently of his interactions with Laurance Rockefeller and of Mr. Rockefeller's contributions to the field. Mr. Stanton accepted the medal on the family's behalf indicating that he would present it to them on a suitable future occasion.



Bob Stanton presented the Pugsley Medal to Larry Rockefeller, son of Laurence Rockefeller.

Past Pugsley Award Honoree

David Talbot received the state/regional level Pugsley Medal in 1990. As a young boy growing up in Grants Pass, a small town in rural Southern Oregon, Talbot developed a life-long love of the out-of-doors. Contrary to the usual values of the time, he sensed that “play” was not only fun, but much more--that it was good for you, the community and society in general.

As a junior at the University of Oregon in 1954, he was searching for a career path when he learned that Professor Lynn Rodney was coming the following year to set up a new major in parks and recreation administration. Shortly after graduation, he was appointed director of parks and recreation for Grants Pass where he had grown up.

In 1962, following three and a half years at Grants Pass, he moved to become state recreation director--a position within Oregon State Parks whose primary job was to assist the rapidly growing number of cities and counties in the state that were starting park and recreation departments. In 1964, he became the first graduate of the University of Oregon's master's degree program in parks and recreation, and at the age of 31 he was selected to be head of the Oregon State Parks agency. Talbot stayed with Oregon State Parks for his whole career and when he retired in 1992, he held the distinction of being the longest tenured state parks director in the nation.

In 1979, under Talbot's leadership, the Oregon State Parks organization gained separate but equal status alongside the Highway Division in the Oregon Department of Transportation. In 1980, the public voted to eliminate the gas tax that supported for state parks, which placed the agency more directly under the state legislature because it was then dependent on general fund money to operate. In 1989, the legislature created an independent State Park and Recreation Department.

The start of his tenure as state parks superintendent in 1964 had coincided with the wave of national

concern and investment in America's out-of-doors which emerged in the mid-1960s. Especially under governor Tom McCall (1967-1975), parks in Oregon were pushed to center stage. He campaigned for office on making Oregon the most livable of states. His opponent in the campaign made “rediscovery” of the Willamette River a key issue, suggesting a continuous greenbelt on both sides of the river with bicycle trails stretching from Eugene to Portland. McCall immediately embraced it telling his opponent “That is a great idea, if I'm elected governor; I'm going to do it better than you could.” When elected, he called on Talbot saying “I have no idea how to do this, put a plan together for me.” It was a high visibility, complex, political project and Talbot was successful in bringing many sections of it to fruition, although the whole 255 mile greenway was not completed.

Oregonians are passionate about the out-of-doors – the beaches, mountains, lakes and rivers, so most of the time the state's governor and legislators are supportive. Talbot's tenure extended through the terms of six governors. Under his direction, Oregon became recognized for having one of the best state park systems in the country. By the end of his tenure, the system consisted of 225 parks and waysides which included campgrounds and historic sites, totaling over 90,000 acres.

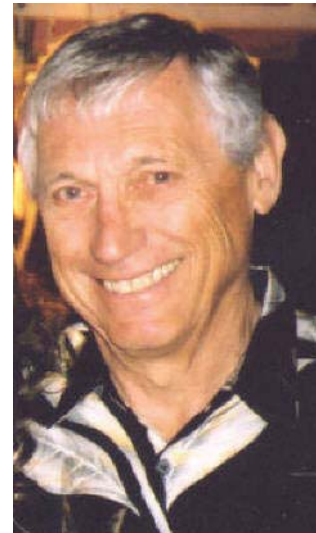
Some of the most memorable highlights of his 28 years as head of Oregon State Parks included: being the first state in the nation to have its statewide outdoor recreation plan approved, releasing the flow of federal LWCF funding for cities, counties and state parks; forever protecting the state's 226 miles of ocean beaches for public use and access through crafting the 1967 Beach Bill and vigorously defending it against challenges in the courts; management of Oregon's unusual Wild and Scenic Rivers protection program; establishment and management of the Willamette River Greenway – an extensive park and open space effort along the entire length of the river from Eugene to Portland; implementation of new and far-reaching state and federal laws to preserve and protect Oregon's historic resources; establishing the Columbia Gorge Scenic Recreation Area, and developing the state's recreation trail system.

Almost single-handedly, Talbot successfully led fundraising efforts to save the lower 15 miles of the Deschutes River from private development and subsequent loss to public use. The state had long owned a park at the mouth of the river. When the owners of the river corridor lands on both sides, upriver indicated they were going to sell to a private sports fishing group, Talbot galvanized private backing for securing an option and then secured a funding package from multiple sources to acquire it for the public. This leadership was recognized by Governor Victor Atiyeh when he presented Talbot with a special meritorious award.

He spearheaded establishment of the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps in 1987 at the direction of Governor Neil Goldschmidt – a program which provided not only job opportunities for young people throughout the state, but also benefited Oregon's natural environment. He was also one of the prime movers in developing the Glenn Jackson Scholarship Program, which assisted children of Department of Transportation and Parks employees in obtaining a college education.

Talbot played a central role in reorganizing and reconstituting the National Conference on State Parks into the National Association of State Park Directors. The older organization had lost some focus and had become in some respects, a social club consisting of retired NPS officials and their old friends in state parks. The new organization became a forum for the 50 state park directors to help one another, which was particularly useful for new appointees, many of whom were political appointments who may not know much about the job.

In the state capitol, three of the portraits of Oregon governors bear testimony to projects Talbot brought to fruition. Tom McCall is portrayed on a beach, since he regarded saving the beaches as his major legacy. In the cases of Governor's Bob Straub and Vic Atiyeh, the backgrounds are the Willamette Greenway and the Deschutes River respectively, which they regarded as the outstanding achievements of their administrations.



Reflecting on his career Talbot said:

Those were wonderful years when it seemed that just about everyone wanted to help. As a country we seemed to understand that parks were good, not just to protect their natural values but for their contribution to our economy as well. As a people, we seemed to recognize the necessity of providing recreational opportunities for our children and families. It was truly a fun time to be part of the "Parks Team."

Source: Lawrence C. Merriam Jr. (1992) Oregon's National Highway Park System, 1921-1989: An Administrative History, Salem Oregon: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

NRPA Congress

Mark your calendars for October 19 – 22. See you in San Antonio!



San Antonio Convention and Visitor Bureau
<http://www.sanantoniocvb.com/>