

# IPRA Today

**December 2009**  
**Volume X, Issue 6**



## Gil Spence Announces Retirement

Gil Spence has announced his retirement effective December 31, 2009 as Leisure Services Manager for the City of Dubuque. Spence has been in the profession for thirty-eight years, thirty-four of them in Dubuque. His career began in 1972 as Activity Specialist at the Security Hospital at Oakdale. In 1973, he managed a summer camp near St. Charles, Iowa before moving to become a Recreation Supervisor for the City of Des Moines in 1974. In 1975, Spence became Assistant Recreation Director in Dubuque and advanced to become department manager in 1986.

Spence has held most every elected position in IPRA, serving as president in 1980. He has also served on the Great Lakes Regional Council and the board of the American Park and Recreation Society. In 1980, he received the Richard Slattery Award, IPRA's highest professional award.



Throughout his thirty-four years in Dubuque many things have changed, and there are many highlights. He lists expansion of the park system facilities and the community beautification as two of them.

Spence's closing comment is, "I have been fortunate to work for and with many fine people and made many friends through IPRA. I wish you all, and IPRA, nothing but the best. *Thanks.*"

*Our Mission ...  
 "To support the advancement of park, recreation and environmental conservation opportunities through education, resource tools and advocacy."*

[www.iapra.org](http://www.iapra.org)

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# Li6 – IPRA Leadership Institute

February 2-3, 2010 is the date for the next IPRA Leadership Institute, **Li6**. If you are unfamiliar with the program it is a **FREE** 24 hour leadership program spread out over two half days. This intensive training opportunity is held at the IPRA Offices in Grinnell. The intimate, small group setting creates the atmosphere for interaction, discussion and team building. Attendees connect with seasoned professionals and gain the benefit of their experiences.

Li6 offers mentoring, career development and the how to's of becoming more involved in IPRA. If you are a professional looking for the opportunity to broaden your leadership skills and want to become more involved in IPRA, then this may be the workshop for you.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Mark Boland, Boland Recreation, this Institute is free of charge.

The schedule for the afternoon involves lunch, a welcome from a past Leadership Institute participant, four education sessions, dinner out on the town and an evening of conversation with your fellow participants. The morning session involves breakfast, two education sessions, roundtable discussion, lunch and an evaluation survey.



Li 5 Participants



The goal of the Leadership Institute is to develop leaders. The past five years have proven to be successful with many past participants serving in key leadership roles on committees and the board of IPRA.

Terry Hoffman, CPRP and Marie Ware, CPRP facilitate the Institute. Each has served as IPRA's President as well as leadership roles on various committees and board positions. They are also active in leadership in their communities.

If you are interested in participating in Li6, contact Terry Hoffman, Sioux City Parks and Recreation at 712-279-6115 or email [thoffman@sioux-city.org](mailto:thoffman@sioux-city.org).

## Aquatics Wage & Fees Survey



Annually, the Aquatics committee compiles the "wage and fee" survey for IPRA. This survey was created per request of the committee and professionals so we may have ready and accurate information to share with boards and councils across the state to assist in wage increases for our young professionals and life savers and to see the market rate for aquatic facility fees and programming. The survey includes starting wages for various staff and fees for admission, passes, lessons and fitness.

In order for the survey to be the "best", we need EVERY community with a swimming pool who is a member of IPRA to participate – from aquatic centers to small town community pools. It is a quick and easy tool for aquatic professionals in the state to use, and every piece of information helps!

## Bump – Set – Kill

These three simple words describe what happened in the Grinnell Athletic and Recreation Center (GARC) on Saturday, November 14. Our annual autumn adult coed volleyball tournament was organized by the Sports committee. Teams from eastern to central Iowa descended upon Grinnell for a one-day tournament. Matches within each of two divisions were in pool play of two sets to 25 points with a time limit of 40 minutes. Following the round robin play, teams were placed into one of two single elimination brackets. Elimination bracket matches were played best two of out three to 19 points. Teams included: Feed the Chicken (Cedar Falls), International Flavor (Vinton), USS Polaris (Toledo), Little Feather Massage (Waterloo), Dig This (Waterloo), Beer Run (Ankeny), Preschool Hops (West Des Moines), Merk (Tama), Green Machine (Dunkerton) and Natural Born Hitters (Cedar Falls).

Division BI championship match featured Beer Run versus USS Polaris. Beer Run was the champion by scores of 18-25, 25-18, 15-4. On the opposite court, BII championship match was between International Flavor and Green Machine. Coming out on top was International Flavor with scores of 25-18, 20-25, 15-2. Tournament champions received custom imprinted t-shirts with runner-ups being awarded a trophy. We would like to share our gratitude with Travis Mai (Coralville) for his volunteer efforts as the on-site tournament coordinator.

# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FORUM

On Thursday, November 12, 25 IPRA professionals gathered in Ankeny, Iowa for the annual Young Professionals Forum planned by the Special Training & Seminars committee. The forum is geared towards those in new positions within the last five years with topics focusing on providing valuable information for those in attendance that will help them in their positions within their departments. This year's forum was no different as topics included an overview of IPRA and NRPA by IPRA President, Ben Page, and IPRA Executive Director, Steve Jordison; an energetic presentation on utilizing new media like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and the world wide web to promote your department by Geoff Hubbard (Council Bluffs) and Matt Beatty (Ogden) and the *So You Need A Sponsor* presentation by Ryan Penning (Ankeny) outlining the many benefits of sponsorships in parks and recreation departments for both businesses and the department. Following a brief lunch, attendees then settled in for an informal roundtable discussion in which various topics were discussed to gather input on department practices and to seek advice from other young professionals. Topics included volunteer training and recruitment, background checks for volunteers, advertising challenges for local pools, part-time staff incentives and pay increases, tax/non-tax issues, as well as general challenges facing parks and recreation in your community. Summaries of the discussions will be shared at the Director's Forum on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

A special thanks to the Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation for their generous sponsorship of this event which enabled there to be no fee for attendees. Also, thanks to Todd Redenius and the Ankeny Parks and Recreation Department for hosting the event at their offices and assisting with planning the event and a special thanks to all of the presenters and speakers for their time in preparing the materials for the group. Finally, thanks to those who attended. We hope you enjoyed your experience and appreciate you making time to attend the forum.

As the Special Training & Seminars committee continues planning for other forums in early 2010, please check the IPRA website and look for updates on topics and presenters in future additions of the weekly email news.

*Submitted by Joshua Larsen, City of Huxley Director of Parks & Recreation and Chair of the Special Training & Seminars Committee*

Photos from NPPS - November 4, Waukee. Article on Page 4



**Geoff Hubbard , Recreation Superintendent, Council Bluffs Parks, Recreation and Public Property (left) and Matt Beatty, Director, Ogden Community Services**

**Ryan Penning, Recreation Coordinator, Ankeny Parks & Recreation**



**Dr. Susan Hudson, NPPS Instructor**

**NPPS Workshop Attendees**



## December 10—IPRA State Office—Grinnell

### Director's Trends Forum

Do you often wonder how others in parks and recreation are handling the economic downturn? Or do you wonder what the future holds for parks and recreation in Iowa? If so, you should plan on attending this new forum specially geared towards agency directors. The forum will focus on an interactive platform to discuss parks and recreation on the state level while identifying current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist. Attendees will also discuss promotion of parks and recreation at the state level, including state proclamations for a Parks & Recreation Month and other avenues to educate the public and elected officials on why the time for parks and recreation is now.

The forum begins at 9:00 a.m. and runs through noon with lunch being on your own. There is no cost for this forum. If interested, please contact the IPRA office to register today by calling 641.236.3917 or e-mailing [cshutts@pcpartner.net](mailto:cshutts@pcpartner.net).



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## IPRA Calendar of Events



### December

- 10 Directors Trends Forum—Grinnell
- 24-25 State Office Closed—Christmas Holiday

### January

- 1 State Office Closed—New Year's Holiday
- 11 CEU/Aquatic Workshop—Cedar Falls
- 12-13 Certified Pool Operator's Course—Cedar Falls
- 16 Men's & Women's Adult Volleyball Tournament—Grinnell
- 21 Winter S.A.F.E. Workshop—Site to be determined

## To Protect and To Serve

The motto is not only viable for local law enforcement but can be equally applied to playground maintenance workers. Each day thousands, if not millions, of America's youth hit their local park, school or child care playgrounds. Providing a safe yet challenging environment is paramount. This is where IPRA teamed with the National Program for Playground Safety.

NPPS instructors, Dr's. Thompson and Hudson, presented a playground maintenance workshop in Waukee on November 4, 2009. The interactive workshop is specifically designed to meet the needs of those working in public and semi-public playground upkeep and repair. NPPS workshops are nationally recognized for their hands-on training with a coordinated attack of classroom learning and on-site playground inspection/discussion. Classroom lecture included an overview, surfacing, general maintenance, CPSC, and checklists.

Upon completion of the one-day workshop each participant received a certificate. We applaud these professionals who took it upon themselves to enhance their knowledge: Kari Allen (Johnston), Joe Anderson (Clarion), Ron Burt (Des Moines), Angie Cole (Hiawatha), Shawn Crain (Ames), Dennis Degner (Des Moines), Rick Fiscel (Des Moines), Todd Fitzsenry (Kalona), Rick Frieden (Davenport), Jim Hall (Des Moines), Tim Hansen (Urbandale), Elvir Hasanovic (Johnston), Ron Heimann (Waukee), Kathleen Hiatt (Des Moines), Tracy Irwin (Johnston), Anthony Jones (Davenport), Kent Kehlenbeck (Des Moines), Dan Keller (Davenport), Doug Kreklau (Johnston), Dick Lucas (Algona), Ed Phillips (Urbandale), Dave Ross (Waukee), Patrick Slykhuis (Des Moines), Paul Strome III (Des Moines), Dave Voss (Bettendorf), Merle Weirup (Bettendorf), Ryan Wiemold (Huxley) and Rick Wolfe (Hiawatha).

Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 21, 2010. IPRA/NPPS will be offering another fine workshop entitled S.A.F.E. Playgrounds.

We would like to thank **Rainbow Run Playsystems** for their generous support of the IPRA/NPPS playground workshops. *Where making children's play safer is a priority.*

(Photos on Page 3)