WPRA 2020 Annual Report
55th Anniversary • 1965-2020

Mission
WPRA provides professionals and agencies with leadership, engaged communities, advocacy and development opportunities to promote the benefits of park, recreation, environmental and cultural services throughout Wisconsin.

Vision
WPRA strives to improve the quality of life for all of Wisconsin by demonstrating and supporting the critical services provided by the Park and Recreation profession related to wellness, conservation and social equity.

Values - LEAD

Leadership - WPRA is committed to providing leadership through sustainable governance, professional education, membership diversity, public policy and effective communication resources.

Enhance Community - WPRA promotes healthy living, social equity, conservation and economic development through sustainable facilities, programs and services which foster quality of life throughout communities.

Advocacy - WPRA promotes the benefits of park, recreational, environmental and cultural services to residents, local and state leaders.

Develop Opportunities and Resources - WPRA is dedicated to providing its members with diverse opportunities and resources through education, networking, leadership and innovative practices enhancing quality of life services.

2020-24 Strategic Plan

I. Strengthen Governance: Strengthen WPRA Leadership and Governance Structure
II. Professional Development: Improve the Professional Development Offerings and Opportunities
III. Membership: Grow and Retain WPRA Membership
IV. Enhance Communications: Strengthen and Optimize all WPRA Communication Methods
V. Improve Advocacy: Improve Advocacy and Lobbying on State and Local Level
Past Presidents

1966 – Bill Anderson
1967 – Bob Espeseth
1968 – Don Brick
1969 – Chet Miller
1970 – Wayne LaBorde
1971 – George Wilson
1972 – Charles Drayna
1973 – Ruth James
1974 – Alan Domer
1975 – Forrest Bradley
1976 – Larry Lenox
1977 – August Revoy
1978 – Tony Bruno
1979 – Bill Houtz
1980 – Gene Park
1981 – Gary Anderson
1982 – Fred Zimdars
1983 – Steve Stauber
1984 – Jim Kavemeier
1985 – Stan Dorff
1986 – Charles Newby
1987 – Steve Thompson
1988 – Don Campbell/
Bob Rundle
1989 – Bob Rundle
1990 – Jackie Schweitzer
1991 – Ken Van Es
1992 – Bill Landvatter
1993 – Bob Lang
1994 – Cindy Busch
1995 – Bill Anderst
1996 – Bill Faherty
1997 – Marianne Pigeon
1998 – Bob Holling
1999 – Paul Leuthold
2000 – Ken LePine
2001 – Roger Kist
2002 – Al Schaefer
2003 – Rick Beattie
2004 – Kelly Valentino
2005 – Ron Grall
2006 – Cyndi Keller
2007 – Roger Kist
2008 – Joe McLaugherty
2009 – Marty Kosobucki
2010 – Bill Lecker
2011 – Ed Englehart
2012 – Dan Fiorenza
2013 – Joel Gregozeski
2014 – Roger Kist
2015 – Sue McDade
2016 – Craig Hoepnner
2017 – Tom Flick
2018 – Jeff Skoug
2019 – Chad Dallman
2020 – Jake Anderson
One of my favorite books to read to my children is the Dr. Seuss classic *Oh, The Places You’ll Go*. It’s a story that I can relate to through the ups and downs of my personal and professional life, and I think this year in WPRA reads much like this great tale.

“*You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.*”

The strength of our Association is in the collective passion and knowledge of our members. We started off the year with the always well-planned Leadership Academy in a new location in Oshkosh, and I was able to make it to all four Regions for some outstanding Region meetings with excellent speakers, park tours and a site visit at our partners at Burke, Inc. We also had our first ever Quarterly Workshop meeting with all sections, committees and board members for a comprehensive planning session of the year’s activities.

“Out there things can happen and frequently do to people as brainy and footsy as you.”

With our newly contracted government relations firm, Hamilton Consulting Group, I found myself sitting in the State Capitol providing testimony on a legislative bill on behalf of the Association. That was a great day to introduce ourselves to lawmakers and provide input on a potential bill. Our Public Policy Committee coordinated a legislative bill tracker, which notified members of current legislation affecting our field.

“You can get so confused that you’ll start in to race down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace and grind on for miles cross weirdish wild space, headed, I fear, toward a most useless place. The Waiting Place…”

Never in the history of the world has one event affected everyone the way COVID-19 has affected the human race. March 12, 2020, Governor Evers issued a Safer at Home Order for the State of Wisconsin, and we all go into scramble mode. Facilities closed, schools shut down, programs were canceled, we even had to close playgrounds. From the immediate concern of our own health, to our families, to how we serve the community, this has been the most challenging time in our careers.

“Waiting for a train to go or a bus to come, or a plane to go or the mail to come, or the rain to go or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow or the waiting around for a Yes or No or the mail to come, or the rain to go or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow or the waiting around for a Yes or No.”

One of my favorite books to read to my children is the Dr. Seuss classic *Oh, The Places You’ll Go*. It’s a story that I can relate to through the ups and downs of my personal and professional life, and I think this year in WPRA reads much like this great tale.

While we faced some of the greatest challenges our association has ever seen, we witnessed some amazing things:

- We grew our membership…in a pandemic. Through our daily COVID-19 calls, we had people from all over the state look to us for answers and communication.
- We improved our advocacy with communication with various state agencies, including the Governor’s Office. We participated in the League of WI Municipalities’ meetings to provide input on pool openings.
- Our committees were engaged in all aspects of the Association, including amazing growth in our Communications & Professional Development Committee.
- We enhanced our communication through our website, daily COVID-19 calls and outreach to relevant partners.
- We were able to make a monumental change in the date of our Annual Conference, which will allow for a more robust educational and event schedule for years to come.
- We have and are still participating in a legislative process to update the State Aquatic Code.
- We were invited to participate and provide input on the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant program with the Governor.

“So be sure when you step. Step with care and great tact and do not scratch your right ear when you hear the fall of leaves in the morning or see the firstấm grass cut…”

With coordinated leadership from our Executive Board, Board of Directors and ARC Association Management Company, we pivoted quickly to address the needs of our members through daily COVID-19 Zoom calls, in which I witnessed the best of our Association. There was great discussion, increased participation in our WPRA Connect, countless hours devoted to how we could serve our communities through innovative programming, safe practices and protocols for reopening plans and mental health programs. We had to make some difficult decisions with cancellations of the Spring Workshop, the Fall Conference and regional meetings. Our WPRA world was turned upside down with this pandemic, but we do what we do best…we improvise. We have amazing passion and enthusiasm in our membership, and there are so many to thank for their role in creating amazing plans to address the pandemic and how we can best make our communities a great place to live, work and play.

“But on you will go though the weather be foul. On you will go though your enemies prowl.”

Sincerely,

**Jake Anderson**

**WPRA President, 2020**
# Membership

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Year-to-Date 2020 As of Sep. 11</th>
<th>Year-End 2019</th>
<th>Year-End 2018</th>
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<td><strong>Total Members</strong></td>
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<td>Total Premier Agencies</td>
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* Membership categories added/omitted per the 2020 Bylaws Amendments.