

THE ALABAMIAN

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION • SUMMER 2018



Out Is In

A Shade Structure for Every Occasion





Fall Workshop

September 18-20

J.A. Dawson & Co.
play. design. products. service.

Sponsored by:
Alabama Recreation and Parks Foundation
and
J.A. Dawson & Company, Inc.

The registration fee is \$125 per person and due no later than Friday, September 7.

Please make checks payable to ARPF (Foundation) and mail to:
Alabama Recreation and Parks Foundation/PO Box 230579/Montgomery, Alabama 36123.

If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Norman, 334.279.9160, nnorman@arpaonline.org.

Session Information

The 2018 Fall Workshop will feature sessions on playground maintenance and inclusive play, facilitated by GameTime; and training regarding the Coach Safety Act provided by ENCORE Rehabilitation, Inc.

Other guest speaker information to come!



Hotel Information

A room block has been set up for your convenience with the Hampton Inn & Suites.

The room rates are as follows:

Inland view: \$116

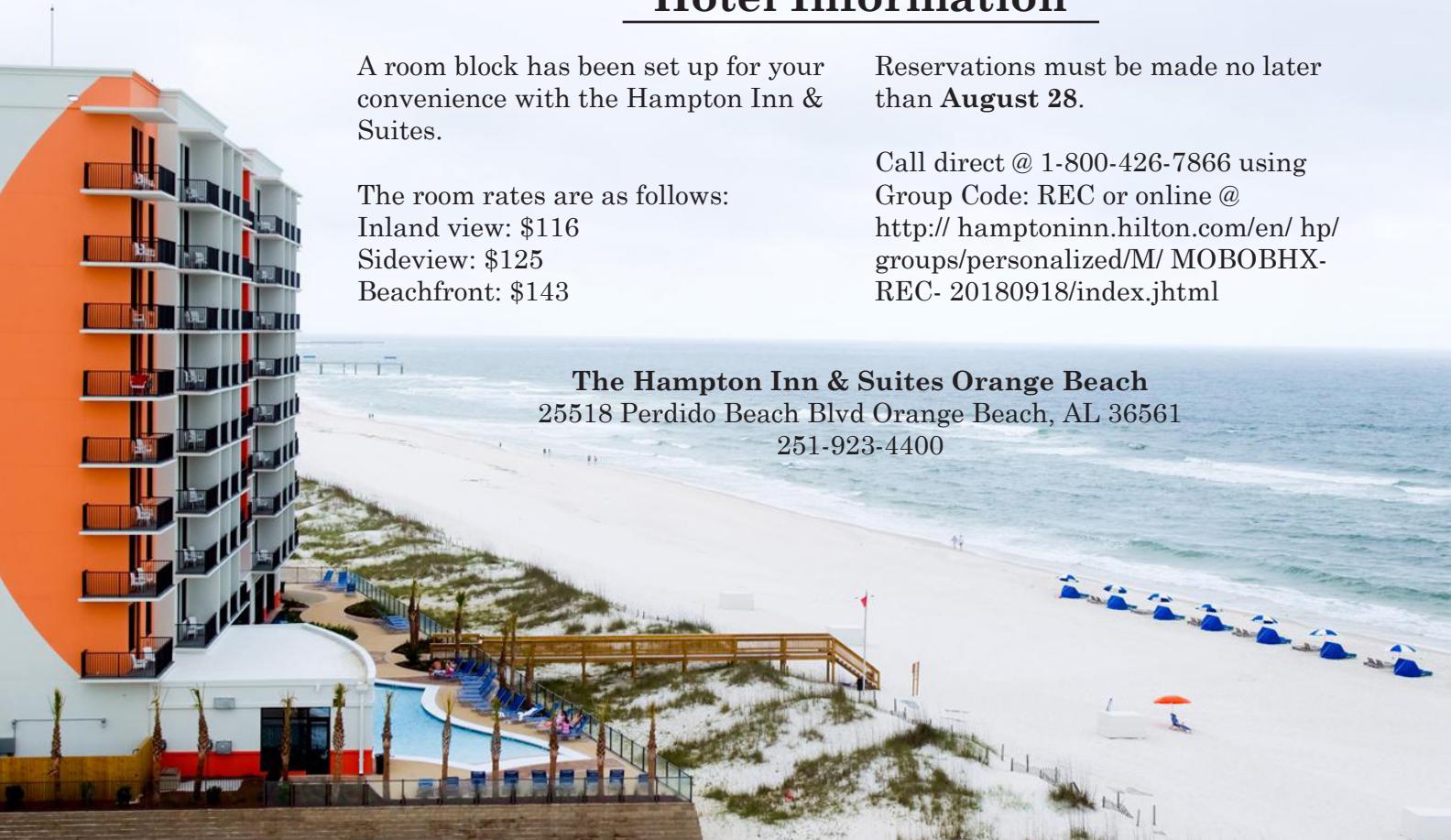
Sideview: \$125

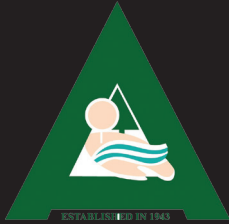
Beachfront: \$143

Reservations must be made no later than **August 28**.

Call direct @ 1-800-426-7866 using
Group Code: REC or online @
<http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/groups/personalized/M/MOBOBHX-REC-20180918/index.jhtml>

The Hampton Inn & Suites Orange Beach
25518 Perdido Beach Blvd Orange Beach, AL 36561
251-923-4400





Laura Leigh Chesser
2018 Publications/Marketing Chair

Natalie Norman
Executive Director
Alabama Recreation and
Parks Association

2018 Board of Directors

- Summer Ammons – President
- Drew Peterson – Past President
- Billy Powell – President Elect
- Katrina Frazier – Secretary
- Sandi Wilson – Treasurer
- Gina Bryant – District 1 Chair
- Eric Scott – District 2 Chair
- David Primus, Jr – District 3 Chair
- Ed Canady – District 4 Chair
- Laura Leigh Chesser – District 5 Chair
- Deirdre Womack – District 6 Chair
- Ella Austin-Mooney – District 7 Chair
- Luci Ray – Corporate Representative
- Willie Moore III – CDS Chair

2018 Committee Chairs

- Alabama Five-O – Sandi Wilson
- Awards – Mandy Johnson
- Conference Site – Natalie Norman
- Conference Education – Gary Minor
- COPP – Drew Peterson
- Finance – Sandi Wilson
- Long Range Planning – Billy Powell
- Marketing/Publications – Laura Leigh Chesser
- Membership – Gayle Milam
- Nominating – Drew Peterson
- Professional Development – Robin Brothers
- Recreational Sports – Kenny Thompson
- Therapeutic Recreation – Carla Wilson

Published by: B Creative Designs, LLC
bmac585@gmail.com

Published July 2018



IN THIS ISSUE

From the President 4

From the Executive Director 5

A Shade Structure for Every Occasion 6

Out is In 8

Skateboarding Popularity is Growing 22

2018 Calendar Back Cover

The Alabamian is the official publication of the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), an affiliate of the National Recreation and Park Association. The magazine is published by the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. as a service to its membership. Submissions of parks and recreation-related articles are welcomed. Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of ARPA. Comments/responses should be sent to:

Alabama Recreation and Parks Association
P.O. Box 230579
Montgomery, AL 36123-0579
334-279-9160
334-279-9161 fax

2018 B Creative Designs, LLC. All rights reserved. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the publisher.



From the
President
Summer Ammons

Hello ARPA Family!

With the weather heating up it is time to get into the parks! We have some of the most beautiful parks throughout the state due to the hard work of Parks and Recreation Departments.

Outdoor recreation has some special benefits to our communities. Enjoying outdoor recreation provides benefits for your mind, body, spirit and the economy. Good for the mind. Outdoor recreation has psychological benefits, including the prevention or reduction of stress; improved self-esteem, confidence and creativity; spiritual growth; and an increased sense of exhilaration, adventure and challenge from life.

1. Good for the body. Getting outside provides physical benefits, such as aerobic, cardiovascular and muscular fitness, as well as improved functioning of the immune system.
2. Even better for your social life. The great outdoors afford social benefits like bonding with like-minded people who enjoy outdoor activities and feeling an increased pride in your community and nation.
3. Good for the economy. Outdoor recreation pays off with economic benefits too: People who regularly participate in outdoor recreation tend to be more productive at work. Outdoor recreation creates job opportunities for others, which leads to economic growth. And the preservation of the natural areas needed for outdoor recreation increases property values.

4. Great for the great outdoors. Outdoor recreation provides environmental benefits, including increased environmental awareness. Concern that results from outdoor recreation can lead to increased involvement in environmental issues.

ARPA would like to extend a special thank you to Trussville Parks and Recreation Department for another smooth, well ran State Track and Field Meet.

**ARPA State Tournaments coming up in
July and August:**

Softball

Childersburg, AL
July 13-15

Swimming and Diving

Birmingham, AL
July 26-28

Adult Basketball

Childersburg, AL
August 4-6

Archery

Dothan, AL
August 11

Thank you for all you do!

Summer Ammons
2018 President



From the
Executive Director
Natalie Norman

Out is truly in! I know everyone is busy with summer events and encouraging your communities to enjoy some outdoor activities. I recently saw a news report by CNN that stated the following statistics regarding consumer spending on Outdoor Recreation:

\$887 Billion to U.S. Economy; employs 7.6 Million Americans; \$125 Billion in tax revenues

The financial numbers reflect how important outdoor recreation is to the economy in our communities. We also know, as Parks and Recreation Professionals, how important it is to our physical and mental fitness, inspiration from simply being outdoors. Outdoor Recreation is on the move, and we will be right in the middle of it!

Educational workshops have been planned for you. Registration is open and online for the NAYS workshop to be held in Homewood, August 29, and for the Fall Workshop in Orange Beach, September 18-20. Please join in and help make these events great!

Our State committees have been hard at work and that is much appreciated!

We had our State Track Competition in Trussville May 19 and look forward to the following State Competitions: State Softball in Childersburg July 13-15, State Swimming in Birmingham July 26-28, and State Archery in Dothan, August 11.

Just a reminder that July is National Recreation and Parks month, and July 21 is National Parks and Recreation Open House Day. So, showcase all your agency has to offer!

Happy Exploring!!

“I believe that there is a subtle magnetism in Nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright.” Henry David Thoreau

Natalie Norman, CPRP
ARPA Executive Director



Call for Articles!

If you would like to be published in a future issue of The Alabamian Magazine, please send your article and any graphics to the State Office at nnorman@arpaonline.org.

The theme for the next issue is “Inclusive Play”

What activities, programs or amenities do you offer for children and adults with special needs?

The deadline for consideration in the Fall 2018 issue is October 5th.

Please call 334-279-9160 with any questions.

A Shade Structure for Every Occasion



Open-air structures bring a community together. They provide protective areas for gatherings, entertainment and relaxing, define a space and welcome visitors with a visual cue that announces, “something happens here.”

So, how do I attract people to my park and get them to stay and enjoy our facilities longer? As parks look for more unique and creative ways to make their site the go-to place for community recreation and events, these questions are top of mind. Whether you have a small park or an entire complex, there is one common factor — shade.

Shade allows visitors to stay outside longer, protected from harsh weather and overexposure to the sun, which increases the chances of various skin cancers. It keeps them cool and protects any equipment underneath from ultraviolet and weather damage. Shade is essential in parks, and can be created through many different types of structures and materials.

Today’s pavilions go beyond the basic and traditional and can be designed and engineered for each specific site, starting with the ideas and needs of the park. Whether it’s a large picnic pavilion or a small seating area along a walkway,

agencies can customize shade structures that are as unique as their facility and community.

Amphitheaters can be an eye-catching first impression and central hub within a park for hosting public events, concerts and performances. Through ticket admission and fundraisers, the amphitheater can be a great resource to bring money back to a community and local charities. It can become a focal point within a park and make the park even more of a destination spot. With the ability to personalize a structure and increase site



recognition with laser-cut medallions and signage, or by adding attachment points for temporary banners to identify sponsors and local events, the amphitheater can also serve a dual purpose as an advertisement for the park and its event. With the ever-increasing interest of online reviews, and social sharing, a unique structure can become a landmark to beckon others to the park.

Days at the **athletic field** can be long and hot in the summer. There, shade is important not only for the athletes, but also for the spectators. Open-air structures can be designed to coordinate throughout the entire complex, creating a uniformed look from the dugouts and bleacher covers to the concession areas, and providing comfort that entices people to stay, as well as to come back.

Outdoor facilities are gaining in popularity as people look for opportunities to forge a greater connection with nature. **Farmer's markets** can be developed for a permanent venue so merchants no longer have to transport tents. Parks are adding **outdoor fitness areas** with equipment and interactive games that need protection from the elements.

Playgrounds and splash pads

are incorporating shade to allow children to play longer without being overexposed to direct sunlight, while helping to keep the playground equipment from getting too hot. Even **dog parks** need a place for pets and owners alike to stop and take a break.

Open-air structures are more than just shade. They are wayfinding trellises and walkway covers that will guide visitors through your park. They are artistic expressions from landscape architects and designers. They are canopies and pavilions that bring family and friends together. Grab a paper and pencil to sketch out your next idea and start the process for a new destination in your community.

Some Things to Consider When Choosing a Shade Structure:

1. Don't overlook the details that give shelters their clean lines and long-lasting protection.
2. Keep maintenance minimal with precision-cut steel components that eliminate exposed bolts and remove the typical nesting locations for birds, preventing unsightly messes.
3. Look for a manufacturer that offers a variety of finish options to best fit your area and climate with superior durability.

4. Ask about options to incorporate wiring for lighting and security that can be concealed within the structure columns instead of in exposed, unsightly conduits. Also, ask about capabilities, such as steel gutters and downspouts that can be color matched to integrate with the frame color and design, inclusion of solar panels, factory-stained tongue & groove, and polycarbonate panels that can replace metal roofing to allow natural light to shine through.



Shade Structure Grant Program

The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Shade Structure Grant Program awards grants of up to \$8,000 to public schools and nonprofit organizations for installing permanent shade structures for outdoor locations that are not protected from the sun, such as playgrounds, pools or recreation spaces. In addition to the grant, the AAD also provides a permanent sign for display near the shade structure.

The application window for this grant program will reopen in October 2018. [Click here](#) for FAQs about and application guidelines for the program and to access the online application.

“Reprinted with permission from Parks & Recreation magazine from its June 2018 issue. Copyright 2018 by the National Recreation and Park Association.”



Photo courtesy of District 5 - Opelika.

Out is In

District 1

Winfield - Out is In for Our Seniors

“Out is In” at the Winfield Park and Recreation Senior Center! The Seniors enjoy playing games together. Here they are shown playing MURBLES, which was purchased from a vendor at the ARPA State Convention in Montgomery. This game is similar to the old-time marbles that they played as children and it evokes memories that they love to share with one another.

They also enjoy playing cornhole. This game is really special to them, as one of the senior citizens is completely visually challenged. The seniors worked



Winfield - Out is In for Our Seniors

together to develop a plan to allow him to play along. They position him in the direction that he should throw the beanbag and then one designated person coaches him to throw toward the sound of their voice. It's so heartwarming to see them include him and make a way for him to play. The comradery they share is priceless.



When asked what they like about playing, they say that "they enjoy playing bingo inside, but they love getting outdoors for their games because it gets them up and moving for exercise and allows for them to socialize and have fun!"



Grant - Softball

Even God must be a softball fan!



Huntsville - Fun Fest

Huntsville Parks & Recreation hosted their 4th Fun Fest this June at Milton Frank Stadium. Fun Fest hosted about 600 kids, mostly from different camps, who enjoyed face painting, water slide, STEM projects from Home Depot and NASA, as well as tons of games!



Madison - 4th of July Fireworks

Madison Parks & Recreation wows the crowd with their annual 4th of July Fireworks display.



Tuscaloosa - Celebration on the River



It's a traditional kids zone with a performance by the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra followed by fireworks.

(continued on page 12)

Tuscaloosa - Celebration on the River



Tuscaloosa - Get Out! How PARA Launched an Outdoor Adventure Camp this Summer

Upon reading several reports touting the success and popularity of outdoor preschools, a few PARA staff members developed a special interest in outdoor education. Our goal became to create a summer camp and curriculum similar to those forest kindergartens or nature schools we read so much about. After a few short months of planning and organizing, PARA's Outdoor Adventure Camp was born.

This specialty outdoor day camp for ages 8-12 emphasizes exploration and learning in a completely natural environment. Based out of a local park, campers experience the outdoors by fishing, rock climbing,

swimming, hiking, gardening, canoeing, and much more. Travel to other parks within the PARA system is common as well.

In an effort to emphasize contact with nature, the camp ventures indoors only when absolutely necessary for safety purposes. Campers must thrive off only the

(continued on page 14)



Tuscaloosa - Get Out! How PARA Launched an Outdoor Adventure Camp this Summer

approved supplies in their backpacks while electronic devices and toys are expressly forbidden. In today's always connected and often overscheduled world, we easily forget the many benefits of disconnecting and experiencing the natural world.

Casie Jones, a local highly qualified science teacher and naturalist, developed the camp curriculum and currently serves as camp director. Camp themes include aquatic ecology, taxonomy, agriculture, and conservation biology. The goal of such a curriculum is to give campers an appreciation of the environment, provide enjoyable interaction with the environment, and teach campers how to preserve the environment for generations to come. Several partnerships strengthen the camp agenda as well. The local Sierra Club volunteers service and materials, while West Alabama Mountain Biking Association (WAMBA) offers their expertise on trail riding and management. Mammoth Clothing donated t-shirts to the camp, while other local experts, like local fish and wildlife expert Doug Darr, have offered their knowledge as well.

So far, the camp has been a hit with campers and parents alike! Not only are participants learning and enjoying the natural world, but they are also coming home tired each day, eager to rest, and come back the next. Outdoor Adventure Camp runs until August 3rd. For more information, contact Zach Heard at zheard@tcpara.org.



Gadsden - Day at the Park

Noccalula Falls Park and the City of Gadsden will be hosting a free day at the park on Saturday, July 14, 2018, from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. The event celebrates the newly restored Pioneer Village and updated Black Creek Trails.



Auburn - Active Auburn

During the hot summer months, it's easy to choose to stay indoors. Kids are out of school—but how can they be convinced to go outside? Busy adults can also be tempted to stay inside after a long day of work instead of participating in activities that benefit their health. The City of Auburn Parks and Recreation program Active Auburn wanted to create summer programs to encourage residents of all ages to go outside and get active.

Active Auburn wanted to show residents that there are simple ways to exercise. Walking is a great way to exercise that increases blood flow without putting much stress on the joints. We teamed up with the Auburn University College of Agriculture to offer "Pollinator Walks" at the Donald E. Davis Arboretum in correlation with the Bee Auburn event. Residents

were able to take walks through the Arboretum to learn about pollination in our area while also enjoying outdoors.

We also wanted to show residents that exercising can be fun and help them find activities that they enjoy doing! However, trying new activities can be intimidating and costly. We created Try-It Tuesdays to give residents a way to try new sports and activities without feeling pressured to sign up for a team or class. Every Tuesday in July from 6-8 p.m. we will host free clinics for different sports and activities in one of our facilities or parks.

Out is "in" because of the long term benefits that an active lifestyle brings. Don't stay in this summer or you'll find yourself out of shape!

Montgomery - Summer Activities

Montgomery Parks and Recreation has multiple summer activities and programs that encourages people to get outside!



Montgomery - Summer Activities (continued)



Opelika - Noon Tunes Brings Opelika Outside

May is such an exciting time for Opelika Parks and Recreation because we have the privilege of hosting Noon Tunes, a free lunchtime concert series held every Wednesday of the month. Noon Tunes is sponsored by the Opelika Parks and Recreation department as a way to welcome the arrival of summer and to showcase talent from local musicians. The 2018 lineup included Larcus “Silky Tone” Fuller, Murray Brown Band, Martha’s Trouble, Strawberry White and Opelika’s own, Muse.

We invite members of the community and neighboring areas to join us on Courthouse Square to enjoy the free live entertainment in the center of beautifully revitalized downtown Opelika. Attendees often bring lawn chairs or blankets and sit atop the green space around the courtyard fountain or at tables under white tents courtesy of OPRD. Local vendors, such as Butcher Paper BBQ, O Town Ice Cream and Scoops, offer food services to our guests and Charter Bank provides complimentary lemonade. Our kids area, equipped with balls, bubbles, hula hoops and other toys, provides enjoyable entertainment for children so parents can relax and restore during the hour-long concert.

Our partnerships with local media outlets, Opelika Chamber of Commerce and Opelika Mainstreet have been pivotal to the success of our concert series. Their support, in conjunction with our social media presence, signs and event flyers continue to be valuable advertisement. Since the Noon Tunes Concert Series began, we have received overwhelming support from our community and attendance continues to grow, ranging from downtown office employees and construction workers to stay-at-home moms and retired couples.

We are so honored to have the opportunity to connect with members of our community through Noon Tunes and to encourage them to take time to enjoy the simple things and spend time outdoors. With help from our sponsors, we look forward to continuing this concert series for years to come!



Opelika - Covington Rec Center Takes It Outside!

Covington Recreation is bustling to the seams with outdoor summer activities. Between the outdoor pool, the playground, and outdoor Day Camp activities, there is always something for kids to do.



Opelika - 66th Annual Freedom Celebration

Opelika Parks and Recreation hosted the 66th Annual Freedom Celebration featuring live music, children's activities, the Silver Wings Parachute Team and the largest fireworks display in the area!



Opelika - Recycled Teenagers

Noccalula Falls Park and the City of Gadsden will be hosting a free day at the park on Saturday, July 14, 2018, from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. The event celebrates the newly restored Pioneer Village and updated Black Creek Trails.



Talladega - Youth Education Series

Every year, when schools release the children for summer vacation, all the persons tasked with organizing summer programs are finding new and creative ways to fill the vacant time given to the local youth. The current trend among children involve indoor activities and technology, and while that is okay in moderation, for the benefit of creating well-rounded children, there is a need for a program that brings the indoors outside. That idea is how the Youth Education Series was created, known to the participants and parents as YES. The principle focus of YES is to provide the children with a hands-on science activity that covers a different concept each week and incorporate group development games and challenges.

Each week, the children flock to the park, eager for the new lesson and games, none of which repeat. They will each get an opportunity to create a science experiment, using low cost, household materials that would be easy to recreate at home with their parents or siblings. For the child to fully grasp the concepts being taught, each lesson is broken into step-by-step instructions so that each child, regardless of age, is in full control of their experiment. Many of the experiments used, such as Slime, Slushy in a Bag, and Oobleck, follow current trends to stay relevant and provide a level of excitement to each individual.

While the education aspect of the program gains the attention of the parents and children, the games and challenges push them beyond their comfort zone, where the real learning begins. Many of the children that attend YES are familiar with each other from school, daycare, or other programs before the first week of the program. This level of familiarity gives more room to expand into group development activities. As the lesson for the experiment change each week, so does the lesson for the challenges. All of the games and challenges use minimal equipment, incorporating the use of a long rope, pool noodles, plastic tarp, and various sized balls. During the course of the program, the challenges touch on developing skills in problem solving, trust, cooperation, critical thinking. After each challenge, there is a period for debriefing that allows the children to speak about what they learned or observed.

Youth Education Series is a program designed for getting children to come outside, into the fresh air of their local park, and to provide as many learning opportunities as possible. Any situation, if seen correctly, can provide a valuable learning experience.

Enterprise - Creative Ways to Keep Our Community Outdoors

Being so close to the beach and some great lakes, we have a lot of challenges to keep people in Enterprise during the summer months; but each year we continue to create new programs, change some and chop others to meet the needs of our community.

One of these new programs that we brought to Enterprise in 2016 and continues to grow and bring people of all ages outdoors is pickleball. Pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the nation and can be played by all ages and of all skill levels. In Enterprise, it first became popular with our senior citizens, which is a demographic we are always working to keep physically, mentally, and socially active. Our seniors love pickleball because the court is half the size of a tennis court, we foster doubles play, and it does not require full range, powerful swings, but short, accurate shots. To start introducing pickleball to our younger players, we worked with our local elementary schools to put on pickleball programs for their P.E. classes. We also recently hired a pickleball coach that comes each Wednesday to our summer camp, Camp Adventure, to teach our campers this addictive sport.

Because of the harsh Alabama heat and humidity we have to be extra creative in ways to get our camp kids outdoors while they are spending their entire days with us at Camp Adventure. Due to age and a crack in the structure, we lost our swimming pool that the kids used to love to cool off in. We hate that our kids have to go without the pool, but we have found ways to get the kids excited about being outdoors by taking bus trips to our Johnny Henderson Family Park Splash Pad, to Lake Tholocco and Pool on Fort Rucker, and we have purchased many...many slip-n-slides, water balloons,

and water spray devices for loads of water fun both at the park and at our camp's home site.

Our campers particularly enjoy incorporating a soaped-up slip-n-slide into their kickball games! While at the park, we also offer the kids who prefer to stay dry the opportunity of taking a nature walk around the lake. Each week we provide the kids a post card that has information about two of the native Alabamian trees located in Johnny Henderson Park for them to find, along with some sort of scavenger hunt to complete while walking.

Not many people like the idea of spending time outdoors during our summers without a pool, beach, or lake in the background; but here in Enterprise, we are using some creativity and a little dish soap to keep the kids enjoying their time outdoors before they are back at their desks for school.



Skateboarding Popularity Is Growing

Get Ahead of the Curve

Skateboarding will make its debut at the Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020. As a result, the sport is likely to see growth throughout the United States, so is your agency prepared? Here are three important points for park and recreation professionals to consider:

1. Skateparks are a win-win: they provide a safe space for skateboarders and help protect property of local government and businesses.
2. Skateparks promote an active lifestyle, no matter the age.
3. Well-designed skateparks can provide an economic benefit.

A Safe Haven

In a September 2013 article in the Richmond Times Dispatch, then-mayor of Richmond, Dwight C. Jones, is quoted as saying, "If your town doesn't have a skatepark, it is one."

Since the 1970s, skateboarding has been gaining in popularity, and municipalities have seen many benefits to providing safe, designated skateparks to protect skateboarders, as well as concrete surfaces and public property. Most skateboarding injuries/falls occur because of surface irregularities and collisions with motor vehicles or pedestrians. If no park is available, skateboarders tend to use whatever structures are available to them, even if there are "no skateboarding allowed" signs posted. Having a designated space for skating activities not only provides a safer environment for skaters, but also is the best way to curb any unlawful activities or behavior. According to the Tony Hawk Foundation: "Nuisance skateboarding is simply a reflection of an unmet recreational need."

Mark Cagle, Youth Center supervisor for the city of Cape Coral, Florida, manages Eagle Skate Park, where helmets and parental/legal guardian consent are required prior to admission. The park offers extreme fun for skateboards, scooters and bike enthusiasts. "Since renovating the park and reopening in December 2017, our attendance has more than doubled," Cagle shares. "We have 50+ participants daily during the week and 100 (full capacity) on the weekends." The park is now meeting the need of the community.

Promotes an Active Lifestyle

At a time when youth are encouraged to get outside and be active, skateparks offer a fun and exciting destination. Whether participants are on skateboards, scooters or BMX bikes, skateparks provide a great cardio workout. But, skateboarding is not just for kids. Cagle says, "All ages are welcome. Our users include elementary, middle and high schoolers, as well as college students and adult skaters up into their 50s."

Skateparks may conjure an image of a youth skating by doing dangerous tricks, but as freelance writer Jeff Ihaza points out in his recently published New York Times article, "Skateboarders Won," "Aging Gen Xers grew up alongside skateboarding's ascent in popular culture, from Bart Simpson plonking down onto the roof of the family car in the opening sequence of 'The Simpsons' to blockbuster video game franchises like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. Skateboarding is no longer something people fear. The skate punk of the late 1980s is now a suburban dad."

The mission of the Tony Hawk Foundation is to foster lasting improvements in society with an emphasis on supporting youth in low-income communities through skateboarding programs and the creation of skateparks. On its website, it states: "Skateparks draw visitors of all ages, from all walks of life. The skatepark becomes a terrific place to find people with similar interests, and most lifelong skateboarders have great friends that they met while skateboarding. In skateparks we see parents skating with their kids, young people offering tips to older folks, poor folks skating with wealthy folks, and so on. Skateparks are where people go to have fun and challenge themselves in a safe, appropriate environment... with their friends and within their community."

An Economic Benefit

Eagle Skate Park in Cape Coral, Florida, was built in 2005, and after 10 years, the annual maintenance cost grew to \$30,000–\$40,000. By 2017, it was time to renovate, so when the capital project funding became available, the city worked with the American Ramp Company (ARC) on the design and renovation. The park now features nearly 27,000 square feet of ramps, rails and pipes. "ARC provided the perfect product and did a great job," Cagle says. "They even came to meet with the

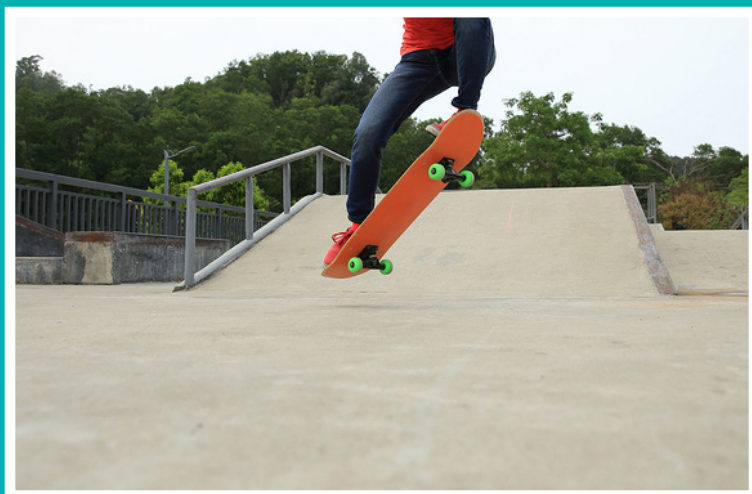
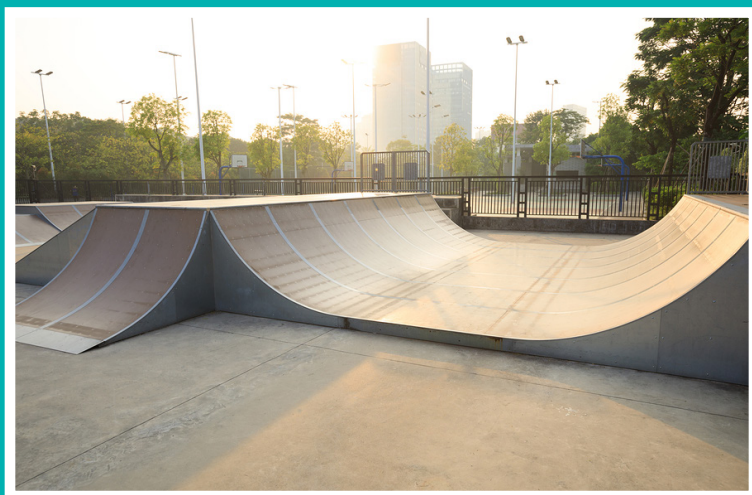
community, including the kids, to get their input.” With the renovation, the park’s annual maintenance cost is expected to be down to an estimated \$4,000.

When it comes to other economic benefits, the Tony Hawk Foundation states: “We do not have any specific studies on the economic impact of skateparks on communities, but from the feedback we receive from municipal skatepark managers, skateparks do seem to have a positive effect on businesses in the surrounding area. When a skatepark opens, it tends to draw folks from the outlying communities to come bring their kids to the skatepark, do some shopping, maybe have lunch, buy some gas, etc. Skateparks attract patrons to local businesses who might not otherwise be in the area. Skateboarders are tenacious and will go wherever the compelling terrain is. While skateparks with high visibility and ample community interaction are healthier environments, skateparks in challenging locations can often serve to activate an otherwise underutilized space. Their presence displaces less desirable elements that require privacy and can be a steady presence for other visitors that may be reluctant to visit a desolate area.”

Eagle Skate Park is supervised and costs \$5 per six-hour session. The park hosts monthly competitions and summer camps and even has an afterschool program, where children can receive homework assistance and participate in group games. Cagle says, “In addition to increased attendance, it is great to see the participants share skatepark etiquette. If a young child comes through on a scooter, older participants will give them their turn as they would any other more experienced skater.”

“Skateboarding requires bravery, discipline, learning strategies, goal-setting and grit, and skateparks are where that happens. What more would we want from a park?” says Peter Whitley, program director for the Tony Hawk Foundation.

“Reprinted with permission from Parks & Recreation magazine from its May 2018 issue. Copyright 2018 by the National Recreation and Park Association.”



2018

Calendar of Events

August

- 22** District I Meeting, Limestone
- 23** District III Meeting, Homewood
- 29** NAYS Academy
Homewood, AL

September

- 12** District II Meeting, Fort Payne
District V Meeting, Valley

September

- 18-20** ARPF Fall Workshop
Orange Beach, AL
- 19** ARPA State Board Meeting
Orange Beach, AL

November

- 14** District I Meeting, Sheffield
- 15** District III Meeting, Tuscaloosa
- 28** District II Meeting, Boaz
District IV Meeting, Jacksonville
District V Meeting, Opelika

December

- 5** ARPA State Board Meeting
Montgomery, AL

January 2019

- 27-29** 2019 ARPA State Conference
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel