Great Lakes Park Training Institute
POKAGON STATE PARK • ANGOLA • INDIANA
FEBRUARY TWENTY THIRD – TWENTY SIXTH, TWO THOUSAND FIFTEEN
INTRODUCTION

Participants from the Great Lakes Region gathered in Indiana’s Pokagon State Park February 23-26, 2015 to attend this annual event. The Institute is historically significant. In the mid-1940s, amidst the rapid growth of park districts, state parks, and recreation departments throughout the Midwest, an awareness of the need for a professional training program arose. At the invitation of Dr. Garrett Eppley at Indiana University, the summer of 1946 ushered in a meeting of representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Dr. Eppley proposed an educational institute to include general sessions and detailed workshops. The group supported the idea and arranged for a pilot program in late 1946. A total of 116 delegates attended the pilot program held at McCormick’s Creek State Park in Indiana. The pilot was a huge success and provided much service to those departments in attendance.

The representatives met again, this time adopting the name Great Lakes Park Training Institute, and agreed to continue the program. Throughout the years, the program has been polished and tailored to become what it is today.

The Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University administers GLPTI in its current format. Eppley Institute personnel staff GLPTI and work with the Board of Regents to conduct the event.

This document contains the proceedings of the 2015 Institute. Session information has been provided for all speakers who submitted the information to the Great Lakes Park Training Institute. This document also records who was involved in organizing the event and feature images of the proceedings taken by Institute staff. Unlike past years, no PowerPoint information will be shared. This change will be permanent to ensure that the Institute does not print copyrighted materials that were incorrectly used by speakers in their presentations.
Staff
Stephen A. Wolter    Director
Jeremy Hackerd      Assistant Director
Kelli A. Market    Budget Coordinator
Sally Pelto-Wheeler  Institute Support

2015 Great Lakes Park Training Institute Board of Regents
The Board of Regents assist with the programming, objectives, curricula, and related issues that should be addressed by the Great Lakes Park Training Institute. Board members maintain the highest possible knowledge of industry and professional trends; state and constituency needs for development and training; and practical and professional leadership needs for park operations and management activities. The 2015 Board of Regents consists of the following individuals:

Brandt Baughman    Indiana Dunes State Park    Ex Officio
Alan Buckennmeyer    City of Rochester Hills    Michigan
Jessica Cady-Bartholomew    Madison Recreation    Wisconsin
Terry Coleman    Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs    State Parks
Ginger Murphy    Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs    Indiana
Dan Otto    Schaumburg Park District    MIPE
Jim Eby    Batavia Park District    Illinois
Allen Patterson    Hamilton County Parks and Recreation    Chairman
Mark Young    Parks Forever Consulting    At Large
Mary Beth Thaman    City of Kettering Parks and Recreation    Ohio
Bill Rhodes    Miracle Midwest    Vendor

2015 Great Lakes Park Training Institute Trustees
The Great Lakes Park Training Institute Trustees include individuals who have retired from the Board of Regents and wish to continue their involvement in the Great Lakes Park Training Institute. This involvement includes assisting with sessions, offering advice, and serving on committees as needed. Current Trustees are listed below.

Ted Bohman    Pokagon State Park, Indiana
Bill Brauer    West Chicago Park District (Retired), Illinois
Elizabeth Geith    Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio
Evelyn Kirkwood    St. Joseph County Parks, Indiana
Jerry Pagac    Champaign County Forest Preserve District (Retired), Illinois
Monday, February 23, 2015

1:00 PM – 3:15 PM      Workshops

Winter Weather: Planning, Clearing, and Maintenance
Lake James Room
- Brandt Baughman, Property Manager (Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana DNR)
- Allen Patterson, Director (Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department)
- Jim Webb, Property Manager (Potato Creek State Park, Indiana DNR)

Winter weather can significantly impact park and agency operations, particularly in the Great Lakes region. Being able to plan for snow and ice is crucial to ensuring agencies are prepared for what Mother Nature will throw at them. This session will explore best practices from around the region for planning for winter storms, how to prioritize what to clear, and how to maintain winter equipment so it runs effectively all season long. The session will feature group discussions to encourage the exchange of ideas and best practices that can benefit YOUR agency.

Recreation Outreach: Play Blooms in Recreation Deserts
Snow Lake Room
- Jessica Cady-Bartholomew, Fitness & Wellness Specialist (Madison School & Community Recreation)
- Mary Crowley-Roth, Youth Arts & Enrichment Specialist (Madison School & Community Recreation)

Explore Madison School & Community Recreation's Art Cart and Fit2Go programs. During this session, participants will get an inside look at how these non-traditional, vehicle-based programs provide Madison with free, family-oriented recreation opportunities in efforts to break down accessibility barriers, serve a greater number of residents, combat childhood obesity, and promote healthy family time without leaving the neighborhood! Explore Madison's hiring and training processes, operating practices (including budget/expenses), partnerships, programming, and their goals for the future. In this workshop-style session, participants will also have the opportunity to get hands-on with the city's other projects and equipment and discover how these programs could work in their own community.

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM      General Session

A Facility Management Case Study in Accountability
Lake James Room
- Tim Harvey, Chief, Park Facility Management Division (Retired) (National Park Service)

Many times, facility managers operate behind the scenes. Despite the lower profile, they play a significant role in the success of any park agency. This general session will stress the importance that facility management has in the operations of park agencies. This session will introduce the audience to four major aspects of the National Park Service's approach to asset management and explain how this is relevant to agencies at the state and local level. The session will conclude with a question and answer session.
7:00 PM  

Toboggan Run Contest and Social!

Teams of four competed for two prizes—fastest team and best team costume—at Pokagon State Park’s famous toboggan run. Sponsored by Miracle Midwest, the competition was viewed from the toboggan run’s spacious warming station. Snacks and drinks were provided.
Tuesday, February 24, 2015

8:15 AM – 9:45 AM   General Session and Announcements

Re-Igniting Your Passion for Parks and Recreation
Lake James Room
- Ann Conklin, Chief Operating Officer (Michigan Recreation and Park Association)
It has been a tough few years for many in the parks and recreation profession. Agencies have all faced budget cuts, staff reductions, and minimal investment in capital projects. Agencies have mastered "doing more with less". Is there a light at the end of the tunnel? Is there a reason to be optimistic about a future for Parks and Recreation? The answer is YES. Communities understand the value of parks and are investing in quality of life. This session will provide participants with information and data that will demonstrate the impact of parks, recreation, and natural resources on communities.

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM   Concurrent Sessions

Gadgets
Lake James Room
- Various Presenters
Have you developed or used a gadget lately that has revolutionized your park’s operations? Every gadget you use could come in handy for someone else! Do not miss this show-and-tell that has been a part of GLPTI since its earliest years! If you want to present a gadget, please contact the GLPTI offices at (812) 855-3095 or at glpti@eppley.org. The person who presents the most interesting gadget will be recognized during the Awards Dinner at the Institute.

Multi-Use Trails: How, Where, and Why
Snow Lake Room
- Eric Oberg, Manager of Trail Development (Rails-to-Trails Conservancy)
This session will explore multi-use trails from a wide range of perspectives. It will discuss how to complete trails, acquire property, rail-with-trail, working with skeptical neighbors, and more. It will touch on funding for development, with emphasis on non-traditional funding ideas. The differences and similarities in developing trails in urban vs. rural areas will be discussed. Proper design, including choices of surfaces, will be included along with long-term and day-to-day maintenance. The session will conclude with a discussion about the economic impact that trails have on communities.

Click, Snap, Post: Capitalizing on Technology in Interpretation
Crooked Lake Room
- Jessica Rosier, Park Interpretive Naturalist (Mounds State Park, Indiana DNR)
- Brad Bumgardner, Park Interpretive Naturalist (Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana DNR)
Recent studies have shown that youth outdoor activities utilizing technology report high satisfaction and engagement rates. Interpreters using technology to "plug into nature" rather than unplug from technology can capitalize on this trend by creating memorable and satisfying interpretive programming. This session will introduce this trend, as well as provide hands-on technology-based activities for participants to explore during the session (group will be leaving the room and utilizing the Inn lounges, courtyard, and outdoor grounds).
Tuesday, February 24, 2015 (Continued)

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM    Concurrent Sessions (Repeated at 2:15 PM)

An Agenda for Urban Parks
Lake James Room
- Joseph Wynns, Urban Strategist/Consultant
This session will focus on how urban parks enrich lives through self-discovery and opportunities for healthy development. Despite the benefits that urban parks provide, they often face many barriers, including budget reductions, lack of quality maintenance programs, lack of major asset acquisition plans, and noticeable criminal activity. Participants will engage in a quality discussion regarding “guiding principles” that will reduce barriers and promote urban parks as community assets and development tools.

Owl Banding for the Stewardship Trifecta
Snow Lake Room
- Brad Bumgardner, Park Interpretive Naturalist (Indiana Dunes State Park, Indiana DNR)
For five years, the Indiana Dunes State Park Interpretive Services has brought the public closer to one aspect of unique bird migration, the elusive Saw-whet Owl migration. Via its fall banding program, over 2,000 visitors a year come to watch (and participate) in a program that combines live research, interpretive education, volunteering, and a donation/revenue component, as it seeks to meet its mission in telling the park’s story. This program will highlight the station’s successes and failures, and will discuss the ways in which other parks can combine several operational goals with one program.

Converting Diesel Tractors to Run on Vegetable Oil
Crooked Lake Room
- Carl Gorra, Parks Operation Manager (Naperville Park District)
- Lee Meyer, Fleet Technician (Naperville Park District)
It is a fun fact that diesel tractors can be converted to run on used vegetable oil instead of diesel fuel. This session will show a real life conversion, done in house, which converted an older tractor to run not only on diesel, but also on vegetable oil. The presenter will describe what worked, and what did not. This session will offer valuable advice to anyone considering this type of conversion. The converted tractor will be available for a show and tell following the main presentation.

Ecologically Responsible Landscaping
Jimmerson Lake Room
- Steve Sass, President (Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society North Chapter)
Participants will learn about the need for greater attention to ecology when selecting plant materials for parks and public lands. Emphasis will be placed on native vs. exotic plants particularly regarding their impacts and contributions to the food chain.

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM    General Session and Announcements
Enhancing and Evaluating Your Park Operations through Technology
Lake James Room
- Allen Patterson, Director (Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department)
- Mary Beth Thaman, Director (City of Kettering Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Arts Department)
- Andy Aidt, GIS Manager (City of Kettering Administrative Systems Department)
The use of technology for park operations has become a powerful tool for planning and evaluating daily park operations. Mobile devices, software applications, apps, GPS, and GIS programs provide the basis for making ordinary department operations extraordinary. This session will provide a review of best practices in utilizing technology for enhancing daily operations and park planning. Demonstrations will show methods for using various planning and mapping tools for immediate results in day-to-day operations.
The Great Lakes Park Training Institute honored the top professionals, programs, and facilities in the Midwest during its annual awards dinner on February 24, 2015 at Indiana’s Pokagon State Park. The Institute acknowledged the 2015 winners of the Garrett G. Eppley Scholarship; the Best Gadget Award; the Park, Facility, and Recreation Program Award; the Richard Lawson Award for Professional Excellence; and the Trustee Awards. The awards were presented by Allen Patterson (Institute Chair), Stephen A. Wolter (Institute Director), and Alan Buckenmeyer (Awards Committee Chair).

Garrett G. Eppley Scholarships

Five individuals were awarded Garrett G. Eppley Scholarships to attend the Institute. Named after Dr. Garrett Eppley, the scholarships cover GLPTI registration fees for up-and-coming park professionals in exchange for five volunteer hours during the event. The 2015 scholarship winners are Christopher Pollock, Megan Bowman, Jamie Hartzke, Brian Bugajski, and William Johnson (not pictured).
Gadget Award
The Gadget Award is presented each year to the individual who invents or showcases the year’s most interesting/useful gadget during the Institute’s Gadget Session. This year’s winner was Larry Miller. The award itself was created by last year’s winner, John Greene.

From left to right, John Greene, Larry Miller, and Gadgets Leader and Institute Trustee Bill Brauer pose with the 2015 Gadget Award.

Park, Facility, and Recreation Program Awards
The Institute issued two Park, Facility, and Recreation Program awards in 2015. The first award went to Michigan’s Berrien County Parks Commission for the creation of Galien River County Park. The park, completed in 2014, includes a 300'-long tree canopy walkway that leads to a 60’-high marsh overlook. The park also features barrier-free hiking trails, a fishing platform, and an excellent natural marsh environment along with hardwood forest and river features. The park is free and open from dawn to dusk.

Kip Miller, Chief Naturalist and Brian Bailey, Berrien County Parks Director, accepted the award on behalf of the Berrien County Parks Commission.
The Institute presented the second Park, Facility, and Recreation Program Award to the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation for the Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience. The Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience is Indiana’s largest, hands-on, outdoor recreation event. Hosted on the grounds of Fort Harrison State Park, the 2-day event features 50 activities and 120 partners. Approximately 20,000 people attended the event in 2014. The event’s goal is to introduce attendees to new outdoor activities that they may have never tried before.

Bourke Patton, Executive Director of the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation, accepted the award for the Ford Hoosier Outdoor Experience.

Trustee Award

The 2015 Institute honored two long-standing members of the Board of Regents for their years of service with the Trustee Award. The Trustee Award, presented by the Institute's Director, marks the end of an individual's time on the Board of Regents. This year, the Institute honored Ted Bohman and Dan Otto for their dedication to the organization.

Dan Otto and Ted Bohman received Trustee Awards for their years of service to the Institute.
Richard Lawson Award for Professional Excellence

The Institute’s highest individual honor is the Richard Lawson Award for Professional Excellence. The Lawson Award is given annually to individuals who exemplify continued and significant contributions to the parks and recreation profession in the Great Lakes region. The 2015 Lawson Award winner is John O’Meara. Mr. O’Meara, who retired in 2014, served for 35 years in parks and conservation in Ohio, including 25 years as director of several park agencies. For the last 16 years he has served as the Executive Director of the Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks. During his tenure at Metro Parks, the system doubled in size to more than 27,000 acres, six major new parks were developed, and over 100 miles of trails were completed. During this time, attendance rose dramatically to over 7.5 million visits per year.

John O’Meara, second from the left, introduced by Mark Young of Parks Forever. Young nominated O'Meara for the award.
Wednesday, February 25, 2015
8:15 AM – 9:45 AM   General Session and Announcements

Creating Youth Recreational Sports Programs with Public Health Outcomes
Lake James Room
- Dr. William Dominic Ramos, Assistant Professor, Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies (Indiana University)
- Dr. Sarah J. Young, Associate Professor, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Studies (Indiana University)
This session will present information about a U.S. State Department funded program that created youth sport opportunities in Cape Coast, Ghana. This program trained community members on techniques for creating and managing youth sports programs and provided information and techniques for delivering key health information to youth participants. This marriage of health information and youth sports programming has potential for adaptation to multiple contexts and can create additional value for youth programs.

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM   Concurrent Sessions

Multi-Use Field Planning
Lake James Room
- Michelle Kelly, Principal Landscape Architect (Upland Design, Inc.)
- Dan Otto, Deputy Director (Schaumburg Park District)
Agencies are faced with the issue of increasingly varied types of sports requesting the use of existing and future athletic fields. To address this issue, this session will present a thorough discussion of what planning for existing and planned multi-use fields entails. The session will also feature “boots on the ground” experiences and detail how agencies are dealing with an ever-increasing demand for sports fields. Key elements for discussion will include design elements, infrastructure needs, ADA concerns, artificial vs. natural turf, charting use, control and scheduling, and when to say “no.”

Timber Take Down
Snow Lake Room
- Brady Givens, Property Manager (Ouabache State Park, Indiana DNR)
- Gene Huss, Maintenance Tech (Pokagon State Park, Indiana DNR)
The Pokagon Crew, as well as staff from Ouabache State Park, are back this year with more tips for managing a park’s timber resources. This session will include classroom instruction followed by hands-on practice of the procedures and techniques discussed. Participants will have the opportunity to go into the park to try out the tools used for timber removal, including a stump grinder! The session will also cover safety procedures and general equipment maintenance that all employees should be mindful of when operating equipment.
Why Are We Here? The Common Ground of Parks and Public Health
Crooked Lake Room
- Sally Pelto-Wheeler, Project Manager and Research Associate (Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands, Indiana University)

The relationship between the fields of park and recreation and public health is ever-evolving. Each of us is here to promote the health and safety of the people in our community. A panel of professionals will highlight successful strategies that promote societal health. In addition, a series of online courses will be shared and explained as a tool for park and recreation professionals to better understand their agency's contributions to the health of their community.

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM   Concurrent Sessions (Repeated at 2:15 PM)

Developing Water Trails: A Case Study in Dynamic Partnerships
Lake James Room
- Dan Plath, President (Northwest Indiana Paddling Association)

This session will detail the development of the Lake Michigan Water Trail, which was established by four states as a National Recreation Trail. Specific topics that will be covered include: ADA compliance standards, education programs promoting safety, cross-jurisdictional issues, engagement of under-served communities, and the promotion of stewardship of water resources.

Flora Force: The Natural History of our Common Wild Plant Pals
Snow Lake Room
- Jules Erwin, Assistant Superintendent (Johnson County Parks and Recreation)

All around us, in our backyards and park lands and green spaces, we are surrounded by plants of all shapes and sizes. From the most obvious and showy of our wildflowers, to the humble little leafy guys dotting the landscape, there is much we can learn, use, and discover about plants. This is just a glance at some of the common plants in the Great Lakes Region that have stories and myths and useful powers…superpowers of the biota, in a way!

First Year Bee Keeping
Crooked Lake Room
- Carl Gorra, Parks Operations Manager (Naperville Park District)
- Kristi Solberg, Parks Specialist II (Naperville Park District)

Around the world, bees are dying due to Colon Y Collapse Disorder (CCD). Park agencies are doing their part to bring bees back because they are the single most important food crop pollinator in the US. This session will use Naperville Park District's bee keeping efforts as a case study, providing tips and tricks for a beginner beekeeping program. An empty hive and hardware will be available for inspection and images of Naperville's efforts will be utilized to show how beekeeping is done.
Wednesday, February 25, 2015 (Continued)

A Better Understanding of Disc Golf
Jimmerson Lake Room
- Dennis Byrne, Owner, The Disc Golf Company
This session will provide an introduction to disc golf and explore the benefits of professionally designed courses. The session will begin with an overview of the game, including equipment, terminology, and the differences in Recreational, Intermediate, and Championship level courses. The costs of designing, building, and operating a disc golf course will be highlighted. Attendees will also learn about working with professional designers and local disc golf clubs to boost use and interest in the courses. Finally, the health, social, and economic benefits of disc golf will be examined to show how courses can benefit park agencies and fit with their strategic plans.

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM General Session and Announcements

Conquering Stress
Lake James Room
- Scott Watson, Founder (Heartland Intervention, LLC)
Stress: It can make us more productive or cause us to shut down all together. Join Scott J. Watson for an energetic and fun romp through the world of stress and coping. Participants will be challenged through stories and illustrations to examine coping skills to deal with challenges big and small. Each participant will have the opportunity to consider at least 15 NEW ways to deal with their stress. Scott will draw upon many years of experience to provide a high-energy session that may include laughs and tears.
Vendor Social

Every year, the Vendor Social provides attendees with the opportunity to relax, have fun, and view the latest products geared toward the park and recreation profession. The Vendor Social will kicked off in the Lake James Room with a buffet dinner and bar, followed by games and vendor booths. Door prizes were drawn throughout the evening.
Blending Park Maintenance and Programming
Lake James Room
- Alan Buckenmeyer, Park Operations Manager (City of Rochester Hills)
- Mary Beth Thaman, Director (City of Kettering Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Arts Department)
- Mark Young, Consultant (Parks Forever)
Ensuring that different aspects of park operations are coordinated is crucial to the success of any agency. This session will explore issues and best practices related to the coordination of park/facility maintenance and recreation programming. Specific examples will be provided to illustrate the necessity of such coordination, including mowing schedules/locations of day camps, staff time/tournament schedules, and the traditional park maintenance model/integrated park and recreation service delivery model. By the end of the session, participants will have an outline for how to better organize maintenance and programming so they support each other instead of causing friction.

Tree Planting and Maintenance for the Long Term
Snow Lake Room
- Phil Graf, Urban Forester (Graf Natural Resources Management/GIS)
In the wake of the Emerald Ash Borer, many communities and Park Districts are now in reforestation mode. This presentation will review procedures to protect investments of trees with proper maintenance such as water management, fertilization, and establishment pruning. Strategies will be discussed to decrease tree mortality and increase the long term sustainability of trees in the urban landscape.

Choosing to be Great through Great Service Delivery
Lake James Room
- Michael Klitzing, Chief Operating Officer (Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation)
People have memorable experiences every day in our parks, but are they always good memories? Ensuring our customers have an exceptional experience is critical to the success of every park and recreation system. Learn how to cultivate a culture of excellence within your organization based on the successes and challenges of a Gold Medal agency.