

FLASH

The Official Publication of the Alaska Recreation and Park Association

2019 Pre-conference Edition

www.alaskaarpa.org



Letter From the President

Donnie Hayes, CPRP
Pioneer Park Manager, FNSB



“The Alaska Recreation and Parks Association is home to some of the best professionals in the State of Alaska. Since 2011 when I first began working as a professional in this beautiful state, I have had the opportunity to rub shoulders, learn from, and bounce ideas off of these hard working recreation professionals. Attending our annual conference has always been fun and reinvigorating and this year was no different.

From learning about recreation opportunities in Europe, to Laughter Yoga with Mike “Mr. Mirth” Bork we had a wide range of learning opportunities. This year we had such a diverse set of sessions that it was hard to decide what to attend. Senior Exercise? Had it. Bomb Sniffing Dogs? You bet. Females in outdoor recreation? Super awesome! It really was a diverse set of sessions providing everyone with opportunities to learn about topics that mattered to them.

I wanted to thank all who came, all who spoke, and all who made the magic happen. Great people like each of you are why parks, recreation, and therapeutic recreation happen in this great state.

The 2019 conference will be here before you know it. Can’t wait to see you all again.

Donnie R Hayes II
ARPA President





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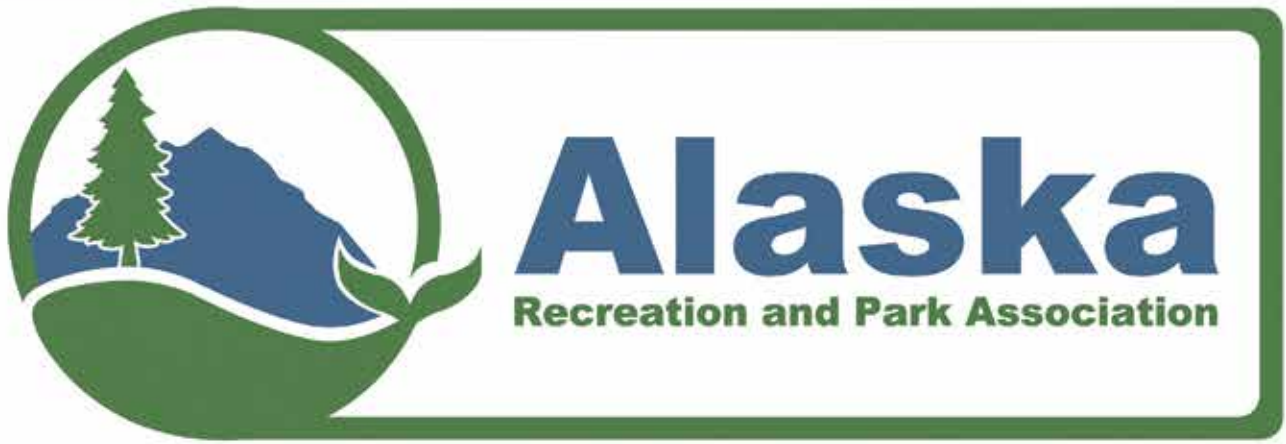
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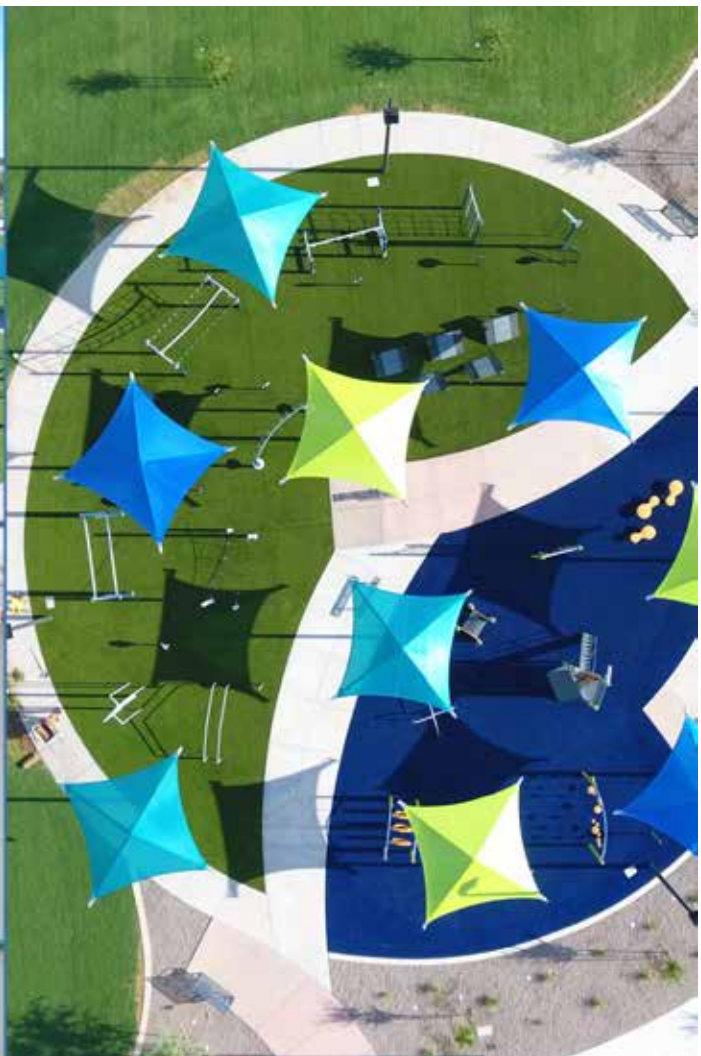


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ARPA wants you!!!

It's time to step up, stretch yourself, and gain some awesome experience. Nominate yourself or your colleagues (with their permissions of course).

Nominations are open for the following positions:

President elect – 1 year as president elect, 2 years as president, and 1 year as past president – a great opportunity to learn the ropes, be effective and help the next president; seat not filled. This position is only filled every other year. There is no president-elect during the first year of a president's term.

Vice president – 2 year commitment – fill in if the president is absent; seat currently held by Tom Martin

Treasurer – 2 year commitment - keep track of the associations finances, collect monies owed, and pay our bills; seat currently held by Melanie Hauze

Board member at large – 2 year commitment – attend board meetings, assist with committees; seat currently held by Jason Avery

For information about the commitment of being president elect, contact Wendy Clubb, Mike Bork or others who have served as ARPA president. For information about the other openings, please contact the incumbents.

Send nominations including brief (2 paragraph maximum) statement to Helen Clough, nominations committee at hcloughak@gmail.com

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Member Spotlight

Kate Thomas, Parks & Recreation Director City & Borough of Wrangell

Kate Thomas started her Alaskan career in 2007, with a diploma in Adventure Tourism and Business Operations from the College of the Rockies in British Columbia. Kate has worked as a backcountry canoe, kayak and hiking guide for high end clients and behavioral health programs serving at-risk youth. Kate's experiences in the wilderness have transformed her into a tenacious creative mentor and leader with an ability to build healthy professional and personal relationships and understand progress barriers while implementing sustainable solutions. She currently resides in Wrangell and has served as the Parks and Recreation Director for the Borough since 2015. Kate is passionate about making small Alaska communities a better place to live, love and work, and focuses on finding ways to incorporate the best into services for all demographics in Wrangell. When Kate isn't working, she can be found on the waters of southeast Alaska with her friends and furry companion.



Benefits of ARPA Membership

1.Receipt of the ARPA FLASH publication

2.Access to back issues of the FLASH, available to members only by logging into the website as a member*

3.Ability to apply for scholarships for professional certifications and education (up to \$500) by logging into the website as a member*

4.Ability to apply for scholarships to attend the Annual Conference (up to \$500) by logging into the website as a member*

5.Initiate and engage in discussions with other professionals across the state through the Discussion Forums, accessed by logging into the website as a member*

6.Reduced registration fees to mid-year trainings and professional certification courses offered by ARPA, as well as the Annual Conference.

7.Membership in an organization whose mission is to "support agencies, institutions, businesses, organizations and individuals who provide or advocate for parks, recreation, and wild-land programs and facilities.

If you are not currently a member please visit <http://www.alaskarpa.org/joinmembership/> for info on membership and see the back cover of FLASH for an application.

2017 ARPA Conference Awards

New Professional

Ricky Borland, Fairbanks

Ricky was born and raised in Homer and is a 4th Generation Alaskan. During High School and College, he spent his summer months commercial fishing. He worked a couple seasons seining in Kachamak Bay and Kodiak, and seven seasons set netting in Bristol Bay. He received his bachelor's degree from UAF in Criminal Justice with a minor in Arctic Skills. After college he remained in Fairbanks working for several years as a warehouse foreman and tractor/trailer driver at a moving company. He began his career in Parks and Recreation in 2008 starting as a groundskeeper for the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department. He worked his way up to the Facility Supervisor at Birch Hill Recreation Area and after several years he began his current position as the Chena Lakes Recreation Area Manager where he supervises a staff of 25 seasonal employees and manages a 2100 acre recreation area.

Ricky is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector and contributes to the Alaska Recreation and Park Association as co-chair for the Parks Maintenance section. In his spare time, he enjoys anything outdoors including hiking, biking, hunting, fishing, canoeing, mushroom hunting, snow machining, all forms of skiing, as well as curling but he mostly enjoys spending time with his wife Pam, and their newly acquired Bernese Mountain Dog puppy Mondo.



Professional

Jason Avery, Fairbanks

Jason has worked in the Parks and Recreation field since 1992. He started part time as a WSI Instructor and Lifeguard in the Las Vegas area working for community pools and giving private swim lessons while in High School. He moved to Fairbanks Alaska in 1994 and pursued a degree in Fire Science with a minor in Business. While pursuing his degree he began working for the Fairbanks North Star Borough as a casual lifeguard and began coaching for various swim teams in the Fairbanks area. Jason became the Supervisor of Hamme Pool and also became a Lifeguard Instructor as well as a Water Safety Instructor Trainer and taught multiple aquatic classes for the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He also Assistant coached for West Valley and Lathrop High Schools. In 2005 he made a move to the Birch Hill Country Ski Center and became Facility Supervisor for 3 years. In the summer of 2007 he accepted the Manager position of Pioneer Park, a position that he held for 7 years. Jason became active with ARPA in 2001. He has held multiple positions with the organization to include Aquatics Co-Chair and Chair, President Elect and President and is proud to consider himself Trans Sectional. He has been very active with the National Recreation and Parks Association attending multiple Political Action conferences as well as being on the Parks Champion committee for 3 years. Jason recently started a new journey and is working for a small local Fairbanks business specializing in Expediting, Remote Camp and logistics. He will always be part of the ARPA family and don't be surprised to see him show up to your local event or annual conferences.



Jason has received the New Professional Award; Pacific Northwest New Professional Award, Bob Robertson Award, and the Professional Award.

2017 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

Bob Robertson Service Award

Maggie Wilkins, Seward

Maggie grew up in a little town in New Hampshire called Piermont which boasts more cows than people. After graduating from Plymouth State University with a B.S. in Community Planning, she packed up her Jeep to fulfill her near life-long dream of moving to Alaska. The beautiful, awe-inspiring landscape and friendly community atmosphere pulled her to Seward. There she held several different jobs including preschool teacher and charter agent before settling with the City of Seward's Parks & Recreation Department where she dedicated eight years to providing safe, engaging recreation opportunities to youth and adults alike. Maggie took a big leap into the non-profit sector by taking over as Director of the Seward Boys & Girls Club in the fall of 2016. The Club provides daily afterschool programming for elementary-aged children which includes a winning mixture of structured, evidence-based programming, outdoor and indoor free play, academic enrichment activities and social recreation opportunities. In addition to her day job, Maggie volunteers regularly at local events, sits on the Alaska Recreation & Parks Association Board and serves as the Secretary for the Seward Prevention Coalition's Executive Board. She has a wonderful husband of five years named Caleb and they have a 3 year old daughter named Dylan who keeps them on their toes.



Outstanding Organization

Seward Prevention Coalition

Seward Prevention Coalition was formed in 2005 with the original goal of creating a healthy community. Members included organizations, groups and businesses with the same ideals. In 2010, SPC took actions to measurably affect change in the community by collecting data and interviewing both youth and adults. Underage drinking and drug-use



Katie Cornwell, SPC Coordinator

and the culture of acceptance was overwhelmingly cited as the number one issue facing the town. With this information, SPC's goals became changing the community norms and providing opportunities for meaningful engagement for our youth. SPC went through several evolutions throughout the years. One such evolution of note is when SPC decided to change its negative messaging and marketing to positive messaging and adopted the Positive Community Norms Framework (PCN). PCN uses the Core Principles of the Science of the Positive (SOTP) to grow positive norms through leadership development, communications strategies, integration of prevention resources, and structured reflection. Another evolution and important milestone was attaining 501c3 non-profit status in 2016. This has allowed SPC more independence and capacity building. SPC is better able to support organizations within the community such as fiscal sponsorship, administrative assistance with grant writing and volunteer recruitment to name a few.

Some community projects SPC has been involved with:

- Garden by the Bay
- Assisted Seward Parks & Rec with the launch of the Teen Rec Room
- Funds the Seward Wellness For All organization
- Sources of Strength

2017 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

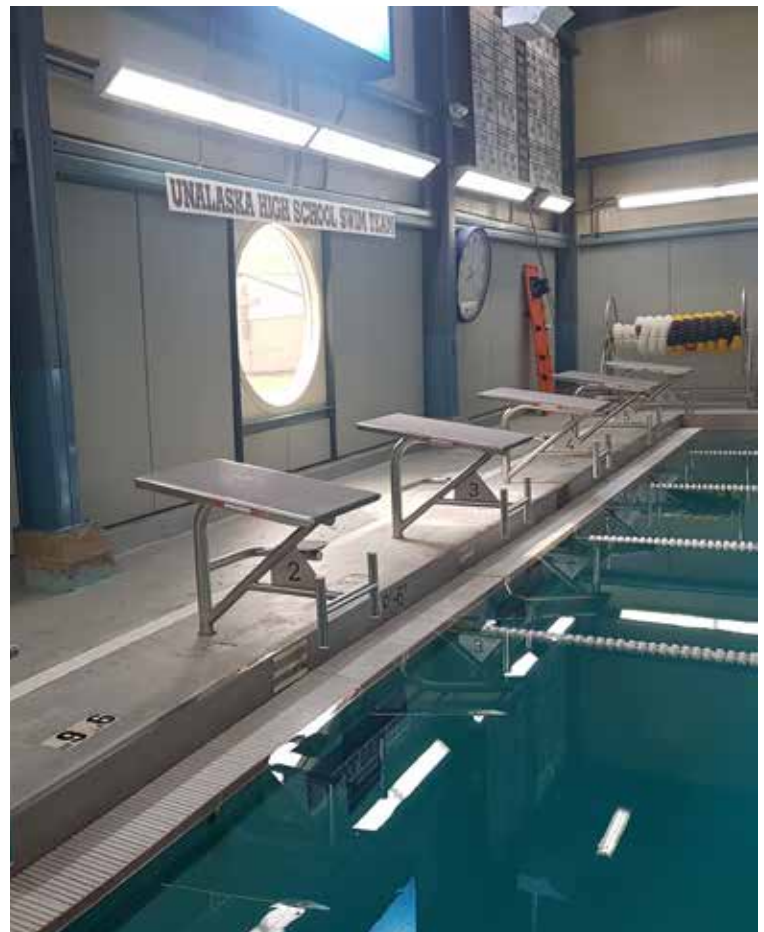
Facility Excellence Award Jim Creek Trail Expansion

In September of 2016 the Matanuska-Susitna Borough opened 3 miles of low speed technical riding ATV Loops at the Jim Creek Parcel. This parcel is 470 acres of borough owned lands adjacent to the Knik River Public Use Area (KRPUA). The KRPUA is a 200,000 acre area of state owned lands, and another 60,000 acres of federally owned lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The area had a long standing reputation as a place where negative activities occurred regularly. It was known as the Wild West of the borough where lawlessness and mayhem ran amuck. Recognizing this as a significant problem, the Mat Su Borough produced a Master Plan outlining changes, and infrastructure improvements that would turn the parcel into a recreation area safe and enjoyable. The parking area was improved to provide paved access and parking for over 300 vehicles. The installation of 3 miles of trails followed. The new technical loops are slow speed, twisting trails designed to take advantage of existing terrain features. The borough has worked for several years with local groups to host an annual cleanup of the KRPUA area and completed a major cleaning of the trail area removing over 120 yards of trash, trailers, and assorted debris. Work continues on the area with the addition of a new campground and the relocation of the park maintenance facility.



Facility Excellence Award City of Unalaska Department of Parks, Culture & Recreation Aquatics Center

The City of Unalaska Parks, Culture and Recreation Aquatic Center underwent a large renovation in the summer of 2016. The purpose of the pool's renovation was to make facilities ADA accessible, expand the size of the sauna, add a family restroom, and upgrade certain areas of the facility that have not seen any major changes since they were constructed in 1982. When the Aquatic Center was built it was meant for a much smaller community. The pool now hosts the Unalaska City School District Swim League, the Unalaska Youth Swim League, a yearly triathlon, community swim meets, Unalaska City School District Swim lessons, tot-swim lessons, water fitness classes, and many more programs that required a larger more up-to-date facility. The renovation was funded solely through the City of Unalaska's General Fund. Upgrades were made to the flooring, locker rooms, sauna, reception area, water sanitation and heating, security systems, and other miscellaneous additions.



2017 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

Distinguished Service Award

Gold Rush Day

Gold Rush Day is a non-profit organization that celebrates the rich 100+ year history of Valdez. They recently successfully hosted their 55th annual five day event. Events include things for the whole family to enjoy, kids and adults, locals and tourists. They have been able to do this successfully because of their ability to accept everyone and partner with anyone! They have some time honored traditions, such as the coronation lunch, crowning the King and Queen, the parade, and the Wine Walk, but they also have new events that come and go such as the guided hike of the 1898 Trail down Thompson Pass following its completion. They provide Valdez a reason to celebrate their history, and even some of the not so great moments in time!



Business Partner Award

ExerPlay, Farrell Smith & Karl Kroft

ExerPlay was established by Farrell M. Smith and Associates in Tempe, AZ in 1973, and has been headquartered and incorporated in Cedar Crest, NM since 1991. In 2018, they are celebrating 27 years of service as a corporation to New Mexico, Arizona, Alaska, and south and west Texas. In March of 2016, ExerPlay began servicing the state of Hawai'i, and in 2017 added the state of Nevada to their area. ExerPlay is a privately owned company.

ExerPlay is a leader in the outdoor recreation and playground industry, and is proud to be the planning, design and installation resource for innovative play systems, skate parks, spray parks, athletic facility equipment, shade and site furnishings.



Lifetime Achievement

Helen Clough, Juneau

Helen worked for the Federal government in a variety of positions for almost 40 years retiring in 2013. Her early interests in recreation developed as a high school student in Juneau enjoying camping and hiking (usually in the rain).

A graduate of the University of California, she began her career in the first group of Desert Rangers with the Bureau of Land Management in California. Each ranger had a resource specialty (archaeology in her case) and was assigned to patrol an area of the desert meet with visitors and find out "what was happening" in the local area – motorcycle racing to wilderness hiking.

A move back to Alaska in 1981 saw Helen with the Forest Service as manager of Admiralty Island National Monument where she completed the first Wilderness Management Plan in Alaska and began the Forest Service's Alaska Wilderness Ranger Program. A move to Sitka saw Helen in the forefront of much media when the Hubbard Glacier closed off Russell Fiord near Yakutat leading to major concerns about changes to the Situk River, a world-class clear water fishing stream. Later in Sitka, Helen took over as head of the Sitka Ranger District and was involved in a wide range of activities. She enjoys her annual fishing trips to Sitka where she regularly visits some of the incredible recreation facilities that now exist but were only in the planning stage when she left.

Helen began working for the National Wildlife Refuge System in 1990 where she continued to work the rest of her career, in Dillingham, King Salmon, Juneau and Anchorage. Early accomplishments included river management planning addressing conflicts among users along several premier Western Alaska rivers and establishing a River Ranger program to get refuge staff on the ground and in contact with visitors on-site to learn from each other. Helen was involved in a number of refuge planning projects, in and outside of Alaska. She also was the lead trainer for the National Wildlife Refuge System on planning where many biologists were learning about how to address conflicts with wildlife and people so that people could continue to enjoy national wildlife refuges and protect the im-

portant resources of these areas

Helen joined ARPA in about 1990 after attending her first annual conference in Fairbanks. Her early involvement with ARPA was through the Wildlands Section where she served as chair for several years. She then became ARPA secretary for almost 20 years. At the same time she became involved in the River Management Society. Upon retirement she joined the River Management Society national board in addition to continuing as ARPA secretary until last year. She is chair of the ARPA nomination committee. Helen is currently the national River Management Society President. ARPA has honored Helen with the Professional Award in 1998, the Bob Robertson Service award in 2002 and the ARPA Appreciation award in 2012.

Helen continues to live in Juneau when she and her husband are not out fishing and traveling on their boat or visiting friends and family around the country. They recently acquired a new puppy and in his first month with them, he has been in two Canadian Provinces and ten states, traveling by car, plane and boat.



2018 ARPA Conference Awards

New Professional

Brandon Harker, Anchorage

Born in Northern Illinois, lived all over upper Midwest including Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Oldest of 4 children, graduated high school for Eden Prairie, MN and went on to receive a BS in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Services with an emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Moved to Alaska permanently in 2010 to take a job as a Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator with Challenge Alaska, a community-based non-profit who improves the lives of people with disabilities, their families and the whole community through Adaptive Sports, Therapeutic Recreation, and Education. Growing up being active outdoors and playing sports were an extremely important part of my life and consumed most of my free time. This helped drive my decision to become a CTRS (Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist) so that I could help others who may not have the resources to be able to lead and enjoy the types of activities and lifestyle I enjoyed. I love a challenge and adapting or figuring out a way help people do the things that they may have thought not possible motivates me. I currently reside in Anchorage with my beautiful wife Heather, our 1 year old daughter Brinley, and our 4 year old yellow lab Morgan. I enjoy playing softball, hiking, camping and fishing in the Summer. The fall months are spent in the hunting with my lab for birds and ducks, or chasing Alaska's big game through the mountains and tundra. Winter is spent mostly in the ice rink coaching our 3 disabled hockey programs, and outside trying to absorb as much sunlight as possible, or chasing the northern lights with my camera.



Professional

Donnie Hayes, Fairbanks

Donnie Hayes has been involved in Recreation Management for almost two decades. He remembers his first introduction to the field was as an Aquatics Director for a Boy Scout Camp on Catalina Island off the coast of California. Over the years his love for the sounds of laughing kids, smiling parents, and community fun hasn't waned. He continues to love the joy that comes from providing community members opportunities for growth, excitement, competition, and wholesome fun. Over the years Donnie has learned the keys to success from his experiences as an employee in the states of Utah, Idaho, Missouri, and Alaska. Donnie is the former Parks and Recreation Director for the Petersburg Borough in South East Alaska. He is also the current President of the Alaska Recreation and Parks Association. He is the father of 6 wonderful children ranging from 16 years old to 6 years old. Although as a family they have only lived in Fairbanks for a year and a half they have quickly grown to love Fairbanks, the people, and any chance they have to sneak up to Chena Hot Springs.



2018 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

Business Partner Award

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Facility Excellence Award

Friends of Tanana Valley Railroad

The Friends of the Tanana Valley Railroad began in 1990 with the aim to preserve a Porter steam locomotive that was on display in Pioneer Park since the original A-67 Exposition, the 100th year celebration of Alaska’s purchase from Russia. This steam locomotive Engine No. 1, built in 1899 by Porter Locomotive Works in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was first used in the Coal Creek Mine in the Yukon of Canada, then was purchased and brought to Fairbanks for the Tanana Mines (later Tanana Valley Railroad ~1907) in 1904. Engine No. 1 arrived in Fairbanks on July 4, 1905, becoming the first locomotive in the Yukon and the Interior of Alaska. No. 1 was used for a variety of tasks through the many years of the railroad until being retired in 1924, and the railroad being purchased by the Alaska Engineering Commission (later Alaska Railroad). She was put on display in front of the Fairbanks Terminal of the depot, then being moved to the A-67 Exposition in 1967. In 1992 the decision was made to restore the locomotive, an amazing piece of history for Fairbanks and the surrounding area. Work began that year, replacing many missing parts, fixing broken pipes and the boiler, where on July 27, 1999, she ran for the first time under her own steam in over 75 years.

Since then, Engine No. 1 and the volunteers of the Friends of the Tanana Valley Railroad continue to operate, bringing the locomotive out multiple times in the summer for passengers and visitors, and maintaining the Tanana Valley Railroad Museum, open every day in the summer, sharing the history of Engine No. 1 and of railroading in the Interior of Alaska. The museum is home to many original pieces of railroad equipment, historical items, and a great team of volunteers and supporters!



2018 ARPA Conference Awards

Bob Robertson Service Award

Mike Bork, Fairbanks

Michael Bork's professional life began in 1993, when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Prior to his military service, Michael was a cadet at St. John's Northwestern Military Academy in Delafield, Wisconsin. At 14, Michael was taught military leadership skills that he would utilize for the rest of his life, even if he started as an "at-risk" youth. Military school provided Michael the discipline and structure he needed in his life, and this gave him the ability to excel as a U.S. Marine.

After serving as an Air Support Operations Specialist, Michael received an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps. He enrolled at Western Illinois University where he majored in Recreation, Park, and Tourism Administration. He earned his bachelor's degree in 2000, at the same time marrying his college sweetheart, Mary. And when he means at the same time, he got married on a Saturday, had finals starting Monday, and graduated the following Saturday! He and Mary will celebrate their 19th anniversary this April.

After graduation, Michael worked in Lincolnshire, Illinois, where he managed a small lake and beach operation, and supervised teen programs and special events. After 18 months, both Michael and Mary were ready for a change of scenery, so Michael applied for a job in Valdez, Alaska. Three months later, they lived in Alaska! Michael loved Alaska, but both he and Mary felt the need to spend a few years closer to family in the lower 48. So they packed up their belongings, and their pets, and moved to Monte Vista, Colorado, where Michael became the Parks and Recreation Director for a small agricultural town close to the New Mexico border. Michael and Mary loved the high-altitude mountain air, but it was still too far to easily see aging family. After three years in Colorado, an opportunity came available to take on a challenging new position in Moberly, Missouri. This opportunity would put both Michael and Mary close to family and friends. But deep in their hearts, they knew they wanted to eventually come back to Alaska. Michael kept his ear to the ground until 2011, when he got a phone call from Fairbanks,

saying "Come home, brother!"

Michael has been the Parks and Recreation Director for the Fairbanks North Star Borough since 2011. In 2016, Michael earned his Master's degree in Industrial & Organizational Psychology from Walden University. At the same time, he became aware of what would be a new life's passion: Laughter Yoga. Michael is now an advanced Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher, and now regularly travels the world teaching organizations and businesses about the power of unconditional laughter, and happiness in the workplace.

Michael is dedicated to the field of Parks and Recreation as well, having recently earned his Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) designation. He serves on the NRPA Public Policy Committee, and is currently a Board Member At-Large for the Alaska Recreation and Park Association. Michael has served as the President of the board, and has been awarded the New Professional (2006), Professional (2015), and the Bob Robertson Service Award (2017). In 2017, Michael was awarded the designation of Laughter Ambassador for his work in spreading laughter around the world. He has been an educational presenter for the last four years at the NRPA National Conference, and has been the Keynote Speaker for the Idaho Parks and Recreation Association and the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association, as well as many other organizations. He has dedicated his life to the simple mission of "Spreading Mirth on Earth!" This is demonstrated in his whole life: as a parks and recreation professional, husband, educator, community volunteer, and laughter advocate.



2018 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

Past President

Wendy Clubb, Valdez

Growing up in Valdez, I purchased a local small business when I was only 15 years old. It was my dad's idea to help me pay for college. I learned at an early age a lot about work ethics, business operations and processes, budgeting, labor laws, and after high school, I attended college in Rexburg, ID. While in the middle of my first semester, I received word that I had been accepted to travel with the international group, Up With People. So I came home for the second semester of college to work and save money, and continued with taking the basic college core classes at PWSC. In July 1995, I joined up with 126 other young adults between the ages of 18-26 from over 20 different countries to travel to over 18 states and 11 countries, bringing forth the message of world peace, performing a two hour Broadway style musical, learning about the different cultures and teaching about mine. We lived with host families and we were in a different location on the average of every three days. I ended my travels in Portugal the following summer.

For the next few years, I adventured with school and work, majoring in International Business, Foreign Languages, and finally succeeded in obtaining an Associates of Applied Science and becoming a certified Travel Agent. I was working full time at PWSC as the HR Tech, and met Oly Clubb. After our first son was born, I decided to stay home, but soon realized I was going stir crazy! I became a certified lifeguard and starting working part-time as a day time guard at the pool just a few hours a week to keep me sane from being at home with a baby all alone all the time when Oly was also at work.

I was quickly pressured into taking more hours, teaching swim lessons, and filling in as the supervisor at the pool whenever they needed someone. It was great, because I only worked when I wanted, how much I wanted and generally had summers off. They were just happy to have me work for them.

I was hired as the full time Pool Coordinator in 2008. Along with that came full time work, but also the responsibility of not just the pool facility, but many of the community special events,

gym operations, and summer camps. I also became an EMT and joined the Valdez Fire Department as a volunteer to bridge the response gap during any future emergencies. I attended my first ARPA in Anchorage at the Hilton Hotel, I think it was 2010. I attended my second ARPA conference in 2012, and was elected as the Aquatics Section Chairperson, and have been involved in ARPA ever since. I also went back to school, and earned my Bachelor of Applied Science in Recreation Management in 2014 from Northern Arizona University.

The department was re-organized in 2013, and I was promoted to Recreation Supervisor. I oversaw the entire Recreation side of the department to include the recreation facilities, pool, teen center/rec center/ rock wall, ski hill, and programming, along with the staff. We increased our special event offerings from 12 per year, to the most of 54 in one year, but found a nice manageable number around 40 per year. We developed a marketing strategy and streamlined our processes. We joined the Facebook world as a department. We had a 12-week long community wide wellness program run for 8 years that consistently had over 15% of our population participating. My director felt it worthwhile and encouraged me to attend the NRPA conferences, and apply for and attend the NRPA Director's School.

It was in my first year of Director's School that then Mike Bork said that the incoming Pres-Elect for ARPA would not be able to fulfill their role. At the ARPA Conference, in Petersburg in 2016, the board nominated and elected me to fulfill the position of ARPA President. Without having the opportunity and knowledge gained during the time of Pres-Elect, my main goal was to find efficiencies in operations, increase communications to members, and not allow the ship to drown! I pushed for Valdez to host the APRA conference in 2017. The ARPA Board started to utilize a website for membership engagement and streamlined our membership renewal processes. We also did a lot of research on other ways to increase our efficiencies – some I hope to see still come to fruition under the direction of President Hayes.

In 2018, while under the direction of an interim director, the department was re-organized

2018 ARPA Conference Awards Cont.

again and my position was eliminated. I was reassigned to the Pool Coordinator's position. I passed the ARPA Gavel to Donnie Hayes, Jr. and never felt so much love and appreciation from my APRA family. My passions include my family, ARPA, traveling, travel planning, life-guard training, visiting amusement parks and water parks, and providing a quality of life to the community I live through the recreation services I provide. Someday, when my kids are on their own, I hope to live where there are four seasons in a little RV with just my husband, traveling and exploring the world around us.



Facilities Excellence Award

Pioneer Park, Fairbanks

Pioneer Park is a 44 acre historical park that is centrally located in Fairbanks. The Park opened in 1967 as the "Alaska 67 Centennial Exposition". The Exposition celebrated the 100 year anniversary of the purchase of Alaska from Russia. The property was later given to the State of Alaska and then transferred to the City of Fairbanks when it was renamed "Alaskaland".

In 1987 the City of Fairbanks transferred the Park to the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and in the year 2000, the name was changed to "Pioneer Park".

Pioneer Park is open year round. During the season of Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day you can find food concessions of various types, museums, an art gallery, a narrow gauge railroad, a disc golf course, and gift shops. The gift shops and food

concessions are located in the Gold Rush Town, which is made up of cabins from early Fairbanks history. The majority of these cabins were moved to the Park from their original locations and feature their history on the outside of each building.

The summer season means that the large playground and several picnic pavilions are regularly used by visitors and locals alike. The Alaska Salmon Bake and Palace Theatre Show provide a fun opportunity to experience outdoor cooked salmon, prime rib, cod all you can eat dinners with side dishes and salad. After dinner you can enjoy the Palace Theatre Show which is a family fun, musical styled story telling of Fairbanks' history.

The winter season at Pioneer Park features self-guided tours of the Park, many special events in the Centennial Center, disc golf tournaments such as the 2019 Ice Bowl, private parties, and meetings. Pioneer Park also includes a winter "fat bike" vendor to rent bikes to experience Fairbanks as well as holiday bazaars, a Christmas tree lighting ceremony and theatrical performances. We encourage you to visit Pioneer Park whenever you have the opportunity to visit Fairbanks. It will be a visit you will enjoy, either for an afternoon stroll with some history, or to attend an event with the whole family.



RECREATION

