

# breakout sessions: Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup>

**9:55 - 10:55 am**

## **Invasive Plants: A Growing Concern**

**Donna Ellis, Senior Extension Educator, UCONN Dept. of Plant Science & LA**

**Category: Parks (0.1 CEU)**

Connecticut's parks, school grounds, fields, and forests are under threat, imperiled by non-native invasive plants from Europe and Asia, or in some cases from other regions of the U.S. Invasive plants are a problem because they establish easily and grow aggressively, disperse over wide areas, displace native species, and reduce biological diversity. These plants invade not only terrestrial habitats but water bodies as well, where they can grow and proliferate undetected for many years. Connecticut enacted invasive plant legislation in 2003, joining several other New England states including Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. This talk will focus on recognizing common invasive plants on school grounds and in parks, selecting non-chemical management options, and choosing non-invasive alternatives.

## **Our Wild Neighbors with Animal Embassy**

**Chris Evers, Director & Founder, Animal Embassy**

**Category: PRG (0.1 CEU)**

Animal Embassy will present options for recreation professionals who wish to incorporate local wildlife and naturalist themes into programming. Delegates will meet live Animal Ambassadors native to the state of Connecticut such as an Eastern Box Turtle, a Gray Tree Frog, a Common Snapping Turtle and a Rabbit. We will also meet a Monk Parakeet which although native to Brazil, has established thriving colonies in Connecticut and is now considered an "introduced and invasive species." We will discuss what this means and how other invasive species affect our local ecosystem and demonstrate how programming incorporating these themes can work for your vacation camps, summer camps and special events. Explore how incorporating nature walks helps children to discover local animals and their habitats, understand the importance of preserving habitats, and to respect and appreciate all living things. Join us to learn activities that can impart these same concepts without the incorporation of live animals. Games which incorporate wildlife photos, wildlife artifacts or "beanie babies," provide a fun and educational opportunity for children. With a game of grouping photos (in teams or individually), children learn that animals come in all shapes, forms, colors, and sizes. Animal Classifications help us to recognize similarities and to appreciate individual characteristics. Your active participation in this classification "game" will enable you to later train your program staff to achieve some of these goals.

## **Using Economic Impact Data to Demonstrate an Agency's Relevance**

**Chris Nunes, Director of Parks & Recreation, The Woodlands Township**

**Category: FIN (0.1 CEU)**

The development of a new park, facility, or even event is now looked at through a different metric than residents served. Professionals are now asked to develop economic impact studies for their Boards and Councils, however doing one right that is defensible is a challenge. The goal of this session is for the professional to develop a study that can be used for a variety of events and facilities.

## **Recreation Professionals' Reports of Best Practices for Aquatics Management**

**Joshua Medeiros, Director of Parks & Recreation, Town of Canton; Adjunct Professor, Southern Connecticut State University**

**Category: AQU (0.1 CEU)**

Aquatics management is a broad and often times challenging facet of the job for many recreation professionals. Understanding best practices in areas including personnel, operations and events, and programming will provide practitioners the opportunity to implement changes at their facilities. This session disseminates the findings of a qualitative study examining recreation professionals' reports on best practices for aquatics management. 15 professionals from 15 recreation departments across Connecticut were interviewed and shared their stories. Conclusions and recommendations for practice were established.

## **Embracing Participants with Disabilities in Your Outdoor Adventure Programs**

**Martin Torresquintero, MS Outdoor Adventure Coordinator, New Haven Parks Recreation & Trees, Joseph Milone, Ed. D, Ranger, New Haven Parks Recreation & Trees**

**Category: PRG/TR (0.1 CEU)**

According to the National Organization on Disabilities, one in every five people has a disability. However, despite the fact that only eight percent of the estimated population with disabilities uses wheelchairs, crutches, and walkers, the reality is that many programs that can easily be adapted to accommodate a wide variety of participants are not available. In this session participants will learn about current trends in adaptive techniques for rock climbing, ropes courses, canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, as well as archery, bird-watching, and cycling. In addition, participants will also learn how these low-cost and clever adaptations can also make outdoor adventures more suitable for participants with lower mobility due to age or illness.

**11:05 am - 12:05 pm**

## **Pest Management: The Newest Products and Services Permitted Under State Regulations**

**Richard Calarco, Director of Parks & Recreation, Town of Hebron**

**Category: Parks (0.1 CEU)**

The session will focus on various new products and methods that are permitted on school grounds in accordance with state regulations. Participants will learn the products and methods which are permitted on school grounds, identify which products to use to address turf or ornamental problems, and describe the process on how to use said products.

## **Not Another Meeting!?!**

**Maureen Dougherty, Let's Go with Dr. Mo, LLC**

**Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)**

Meetings are necessary, but not all meetings are essential or productive. Did you know, the average business reportedly spends 31 hours in "unproductive" meetings each month? How much time do you spend attending or running meetings? This session will focus on helping participants run a fun (yes, fun) and effective meeting, how to create a workable agenda, and will provide an assessment tool for you to evaluate the most recent meeting you attended. Follow the recommendations in this session and people won't want to miss your meetings ever again!

## **Creating Safer Spaces**

**Dennis Golden, CEO, IM-SAFE**

**Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)**

Challenged with substantial budget constraints, Connecticut's parks and recreation departments face significant challenges when attempting to implement sustainable safety and security plans for open green areas, buildings, and venues. At the same time, the absence of such a program can result in people not visiting parks or participating in programs due to safety concerns for themselves or family members. This presentation will expose attendees to a range of affordable safety protocols that can be easily implemented as budgets and staffing resources allow. The approach allows managers to stage the various protocols to meet specific needs, venues, and timelines as required.

## **Real Life Confessionals from Aquatics Professionals:**

### **Managing Crisis at Your Facility**

**Joshua Medeiros, Director of Parks & Recreation, Town of Canton; Adjunct Professor, Southern Connecticut State University, Jaime Krajewski, Facility Manager, Town of West Hartford**

**Category: AQU (0.1 CEU)**

Aquatics professionals from across the state have submitted real life stories of high level emergencies that have occurred at their facilities. Aquatics Section Co-Chairs Joshua Medeiros and Jaime Krajewski will review top scenarios and dissect the problems in a roundtable discussion format. This roundtable will allow professionals to discuss best ways to handle unexpected situations that happen at pools, lakes, and beaches across the state.

## You Haven't Lived Until You've Merged!

**Anna Park**, Recreation Supervisor, Glastonbury Parks & Recreation, **Liz Gambacorta**, Program Coordinator, Glastonbury Parks & Recreation  
**Category: MKT/TEC (0.1 CEU)**

Did you know that you can use the "Mail Merge" feature in multiple applications for more than just mailing labels & envelopes? This session will show you how to save yourself hours of work by creating nametags, forms, letters, email and more using Mail Merge! Bring a laptop with you if you want to follow along.

## 2:50 - 3:50 pm

### Capital Improvement Projects 101

**Eric Roise**, Associate Landscape Architect - Recreation Designer, BSC Group - Connecticut  
**Category: MGT/Parks (0.1 CEU)**

Have you been charged with running a construction project? Don't have a clue what to do? This talk will outline what to expect, who are the major players, what is the basic lingo, how to publicly bid a project, and how to hire consultants and contractors.

### Better Survey Design: Results that Get Results

**Bobbi Nance**, President, Recreation Results  
**Category: MGT/MKT/TEC (0.1 CEU)**  
Customer feedback is essential in better

servicing the needs of our community, but often customer surveys and program evaluations are an afterthought. Learn how to strategically rethink what, when, and how you are asking for customer feedback to produce results you can actually use. See examples of the technology available in most current survey software and how it can actually be used to make surveying more fun, less repetitive, and even help promote better customer service and marketing efforts.

### Strategic Financial and Operational Management: Your First Objective!

**Chris Nunes**, Director of Parks & Recreation, The Woodlands Township  
**Category: FIN (0.1 CEU)**

Strategic financial and operational management is an essential step in identifying all aspects of a facility, its operations, and is usually a requirement in obtaining approval. Participants will gain knowledge of the key components of a financial and operational management plan and will be given examples of what information belongs in their plan to sell their concept. This type of plan can be used at the department and division level in addition to specific cost centers.

### How to Compete with Private Gym Fitness Classes While Maintaining Your Budget

**Maggie Downie**, Business Owner/Pilates Instructor, Personal Euphoria  
**Category: PRG (0.1 CEU)**

Parks and Recreation fitness programs are limited by space, time, and schedules. In Connecticut, towns face increased financial strain due to state fiscal issues that make it harder to offer programs. Yet as the economy picks up, private sector gyms and specialty gyms seem to be drawing more participants, particularly millennials. So how should town fitness classes compete? There are a number of small, simple solutions you may not have considered, and others that involve more challenges and coordination. For example, without major investment, online programming, a trend in the fitness world, increases participation at minimal cost. It also creates an affordable ad-on to people attending live group classes, providing a benefit to the town and the residents. Online programming expands reach to various populations including boomers, veterans, and obese who are not always comfortable in group classes. Our team has over ten years experience running live programs throughout the state, and now we are offering an online program option that can reach more residents with different needs. This talk will discuss some of these current problems towns are facing and how online programming and other tools can work in your town.

## happy hour | Monday 4:00 - 5:00 pm | Exhibit Hall

Join us for happy hour on the exhibit hall floor! Enjoy food and refreshments while networking with the many exhibitors that can provide solutions to your department's needs.



## social | Monday 8:00 pm | Lansdowne Irish Pub

Looking for the perfect way to cap off the evening? Choose from an assortment of beers on tap, enjoy a cocktail with friends at the bar, and relax in this amazing pub atmosphere. CRPA's social at Lansdowne Irish Pub & Music House is the ideal place to unwind with colleagues and new acquaintances after a long day at conference!

Generously  
Sponsored By:

