Board of Directors
Ken Lehr – President
Todd Roth – President-Elect
Doug Knauss – Secretary
Treasurer – Vacant
Paula Willis – District 1 President
Tammy Agesen – District 2 President
Emily Baiada – District 3 President
Erin Timby – Director-at-Large
Kelsey Paul – Director-at-Large

District 1 Executive Committee
Paula Willis – President
Marissa Haynes – President-Elect
Carly Greene – Secretary
Dave Hutner – Treasurer
Chris Jeffrey – Representative
Josh Werner – Representative
Pete Geis – Representative

District 2 Executive Committee
Tammy Agesen – President
Heavenly Smith – President-Elect
Audrey Logar – Secretary
Eric Stauffer – Treasurer
Tyler Fairchild – Representative
Matt Hutchinson – Representative
Brandon Pentz – Representative
Dr. Julie Saville – Representative

District 3 Executive Committee
Emily Baiada – President
Ashley Broudy – President-Elect
Sarah Prebis – Secretary
Andie Graham – Treasurer
Andrew Oles – Representative
Ally Spielman – Representative
Patrick Graham – Representative
Rob Vandegrift – Representative
Karen Hegedus – Representative
Mike Richino – Past President

PRPS Staff
Tim Herd – CEO
Tracy Robert – Membership Services Manager
Emily Schnellbaugh – Director of Communications
Niki Tourscher – Director of Training & IT
Dan Hendey – Education Manager
Jane LaMar – Administrative & Marketing Assistant
Molly Hetrick – Director of Advancement

PA Recreation & Park Society

2024 Awards Banquet

Thursday, MARCH 14, 2024
77TH Annual Conference & Expo
Seven Springs, PA
Sponsored by Recreation Resource USA
**Program**

Welcome  
Barry Bessler, Chair  
Recognition & Awards Committee

Presidential Citations  
Ken Lehr, President

Recognition of Committees  
Barry Bessler

Invocation  
Tammy Agesen

Dinner

Society Awards  
Barry Bessler

Photographs  
Award Recipients

**2024 Recognition and Awards Committee**

- **Barry Bessler, Chair, CPRP, Retired**
- Tammy Agesen, CPRE, AFO, Lancaster County Dept. of Parks & Recreation
- Phil Brady, CPRP, AFO, Plymouth Township Recreation & Park Department
- Heather Cuyler, CPRP, CPSI, Pashek + MTR
- Dave Hutner, Cranberry Township Parks & Recreation
- Daphne Klahr, Ed.D., CPRP, Reading Recreation Commission
- Jason Lang, MS, CPRE, East Goshen Township Park & Recreation Department
- Audrey Logar, CPRP, Camp Hill Recreation
- Deanna Schall, PA State Parks
- Joe Seltzer, Montgomery County Parks
- Jim Watenpool, CPRP, Retired

**Agency of the Year Award**

**Blue Ribbon Panel of Judges**

- Karen L. Hesser, Chief of Operations, Five Rivers Metroparks, Dayton, OH
- Michael Shiosaki, Director of Parks & Community Services, Bellevue, Washington
- Cindie Sullivan, American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration, former Park Facilities Manager, Somerset County (NJ) Park Commission
- Jamie Rae Walker, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Urban and Municipal Park Specialist, Texas A & M University

**Health and Wellness Committee**

- **Chair:** Kathryn Huninnen  
- Jason Lang, Ann Toole, Mike Kukitz, Tom Marino, Cheri Matter

**2024 Annual Conference & Expo Committee**

- **Co-chairs:** Michele Harmel and Paula Willis  
- Ashley Marsteller, Faith Wentz, Kevin Hindes, Lance Welliver, Pete Geis, Nate Diegel, Jason Lang, Courtney Meehan, Cheri Matter, Katy Heslop, Jay Cerkan, Heavenly Smith, Josh Werner, Dan Miller, Marissa Haynes, Amy Wengrzyn

**Education Committee**

- **Staff Lead:** Niki Tourscher  
- Brian Malcarne, Craig Shevchil, Dan Hendey, Erin Long, Jen Fean, Jeremy Mortorff, Jessica Tholey, Kelly Rebitz, Kylene Gill, Lisa Pearsall, Lisa Summers, Marissa Haynes, Tammy Agesen, Tyler Walker, Walt Mulholland

**Blogging Team**

- **Staff Lead:** Emily Schnellbaugh  
- Gwen Loose, Jason Cerkan, Chalet Harris, Jeff Witman, Tim Herd, Stephanie Larson, Bob Dolan, Dusty Hyder, Robert Campbell, Derek Muller, Stacey Widenhofer, Monica Tierney, Kelly Ditson

**Historical Committee**

- Bob Griffith
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society

Thank you to all volunteers who serve on the PRPS boards and committees.

Governmental Affairs Committee

Chair: Doug Knauss
Angie Nagle, Alex Doty, Andie Graham, Andy Oles, Annette Logan, Brian Barrett, CJ Weigle, Devon Serena, Don Holmes, Heather Cuyler, James Snow, Jason Cerkan, Megan Prusinski, Larry Williamson, Marci Mowery, Monica Tierney, Rebecca Richards, Steve Stroman, Tim Herd, Tom Ford
Preschool Committee: Andy Oles, Brian Barret, Dan Sharapan, Derek Dureka, Joanne Sharapan, Pete Geis, Tammy Cohen

Membership Committee

Chair: Todd Roth
Ashley Broudy, Cathy Wegener, Tammy Agesen, Emily Baiada, Erin Timby, Jason Cerkan, Judy Houck, Katie Kollar, Marissa Duffy, Lynn Todd, Kelsey Paul, Tracy Robert, Molly Hetrick

Finance Committee

Chair: PRPS Treasurer
Tim Herd, Joe Minich, Heather Cuyler, Jeremy Mortorff

Leadership Development Committee

Chair: Tyler Walker
Dave Hutner, Jessica Cirilo, Heavenly Smith, Ashley Broudy, Ken Lehr, Courtney Meehan, Bill Salvatore, Kelsey Paul, Erin Timby

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee

Chair: Kathi Muller
Ally Spielman, Andrea Crouse, Ashley Broudy, Chalet Harris, Dan Hendey, Daphne Klahr, Debra Blair, Doug Knauss, Gina Batavick, Heavenly Smith, Judy Houck, Lisa Summers, Marissa Duffy, Tonya Brown, Walt Mulholland

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society extends its sincere congratulations to all those being recognized this evening. Each individual, group, and agency is acknowledged for the positive impact they have made on those served by our profession.

A SUMMARY OF THE AWARDS PROCESS

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society Awards Program is a competitive process.

- The Awards Committee solicits nominations each year beginning with summer media announcements including the PRPS Weekly SCOOP and the PRPS website.

- Information and applications are available beginning in the summer on the PRPS website, by contacting the Recognition and Awards Chair, or the PRPS office. Those interested submit their entries electronically in January.

- Each member of the Recognition and Awards Committee receives an electronic copy of the nomination form for their review and evaluation against established criteria.

- Committee members vote anonymously and do not vote on their own agency submissions.

- The Agency of the Year Award is judged by an independent panel of experts in the field of parks and recreation.
EXCELLENCE IN RECREATION AND PARKS

Carlisle Parks & Recreation
“Skateboarding Lessons”
Agency Director: Andrea Crouse
Recreation & Community Center Manager: Kelsey Paul
Recreation and Pool Manager: Anne Mitzel
The idea of skateboarding lessons developed when the need for adding a skate spot at our new park came about. Several volunteers came together, acquired donations, and offered FREE skateboarding lessons to the community to introduce them to this misjudged sport. Lessons were held for two sessions prior to the completion of the Carlisle Skate Spot, in preparation for new boarders to use it to its full capacity. Lessons continued, at full capacity, each season since the opening of the Skate Spot, including expanding to beginner and advanced lessons. These continue to this day at no cost, including providing new boarders all the equipment needed to join. Due to the new interest and need in skateboarding in our community, a new small business opened it’s doors this past summer.

Concord Township Parks & Recreation
“Race for the Watershed: 5K Trail Run & Rubber Duck Regatta”
Agency Director: Steve Jacobs
This first-year fundraiser was held in partnership with the Newlin Grist Mill and featured 125 runners and 350 rubber ducks ‘racing’ in a two-part event. The day kicked off with a trail run followed by rubber duck races in the creek. $10,000 was raised to purchase new water quality monitoring equipment, in addition to awareness being raised about the importance of supporting and protecting the local waterways that run through the community.

PA DCNR
“Priority Communities Analysis”
Director of DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation: Tom Ford
Section Chief, Landscape Partnerships & Educational Services: Kelly Rossiter
DCNR and the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) updated an online interactive mapping tool to better account for diversity and equity characteristics. Josh was the primary DCNR staff that worked with TPL to create the initial mapping tool and the updated Priority Communities Analysis. He assisted with creating the tool, providing and verifying data, and collaborating on the analysis methodology. This mapping tool is now available online to assist park and recreation planners in achieving the goal of park equity.

Hatfield Township Parks & Recreation
“Pop-Up Events”
Agency Director: Ashley Broudy, CPRP
Hatfield Township’s Parks & Recreation Department recognized the need to offer events that were easily adaptable to constantly changing circumstances. There are always a variety of reasons events may not run and having the ability to be flexible in today’s world is crucial.

AGENCY OF THE YEAR AWARD
Dauphin County Parks & Recreation
Agency Director: Anthea Stebbins
In 2023, Dauphin County Parks & Recreation provided over 400 diverse recreation programs, including 33 large-scale special events, 175 nature programs, 150 Park Rx programs, ten virtual lectures, and other online programming, 12 summer day camps, 40 school, private, and group tours, 30 history programs, and a Community Garden program with 358 garden plots. Additionally, the department manages over 1,000 acres of wetland, forest, meadows, various buildings, playgrounds, pavilions, trails, and facilities, including a museum, nature center, and various historic sites. The department prioritized participation in professional development to improve skills, expand services, and increase efficiency. To fund upcoming programming and significant capital improvement projects that will expand access to new user groups, the department secured over 500,000 dollars in grants and sponsorships; they partnered with numerous volunteers, support groups, and organizations; assisted various parks, recreation, and open space preservation entities through grant dollars, peer consulting, and maintenance assistance; and provided a variety of parks, trails, and standing facilities.

Award Sponsored by BAB Enterprises

A very special thank you to Recreation Resource USA for sponsoring the Awards Reception and Dinner.

Following dinner & recognition of our colleagues’ fabulous accomplishments, please join us for a wee bit o’fun as we go green heading into St. Patrick’s Day! Live music, Irish dancing, and crowning of the District Champions.
OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL
Kelsey Paul, CPRP
Carlisle Parks & Recreation
During her last seven years as a Parks and Recreation professional, Kelsey has been a positive impact and natural leader in her community. She has always been passionate about the parks and recreation field and remains enthusiastic and innovative, sharing her love for recreation, the outdoors, nature, and sports with her community. Kelsey is dedicated to making a difference, serving on various boards professionally and voluntarily, including serving the last year on the PRPS Board of Directors as a Director-at-Large and the last two years as Board Chairman of a non-profit organization promoting community/engagement and providing free opportunities to the community for ten days around the July 4th holiday.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD
IN HONOR OF ROBERT D. GRIFFITH
Cathy L Wegener, CPRP
Berks County Parks & Recreation Department
Cathy Wegener, with over 43 years of dedicated service, embodies an unwavering commitment to the parks and recreation profession. During her career, she has served on the PRPS Board of Directors as Community Branch Chair, Conference Co-Chair, and on numerous banquet and education conference committees. As the Director of Berks County Parks & Recreation Department, Cathy drove the completion of the Gruber Wagon Works Restoration Project—a multi-million and multi-year historic preservation project. Additionally, she is responsible for the Hiester Canal Center, the development of large-scale festival and events, an innovative program series, and a highly-lauded volunteer program that has grown over 300% during her tenure.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
IN HONOR OF FRED M. COOMBS
Karen M Schreiber, CPRP
During her career, Karen Schreiber has left an indelible mark on parks and recreation, showing her dedication to the profession and residents through her tireless efforts to improve recreation opportunities and parks for her community. As Director of Parks and Recreation for Muhlenberg Township, Karen has guided numerous park improvement projects, including the 109-acre Jim Dietrich Park, which received the 2021 PA Great Public Spaces award; created and led countless community programs; and guided Muhlenberg Parks and Recreation Department to become a significant contributor of tourism and economic benefit to Berks County. Through her efforts, Karen has strengthened partnerships with local service groups within the Township, which support and volunteer with their recreation programs. Karen has served many roles within PRPS committees, volunteered on several conference committees, and continues to mentor young professionals and organize a network of parks and recreation professionals in Berks County. Karen Schreiber’s high commitment to her community and the Parks and Recreation profession is hatfield Parks & Recreation implemented Pop-Up Events as a way to continue to bring larger events to the community, cultivate local partnerships, and highlight different aspects of recreation; while allowing for the flexibility to accommodate changes and evolving community needs each year. After two years, these have become some of the most popular community events!

Lancaster County Dept. of Parks & Recreation
“Community Partnership to Expand MWEE in Lancaster City”
Program Manager: Tammy Agesen, CPRE
Executive Director of Let’s Go 1-2-3: Keisha Scovens
In partnership with Let’s Go 1-2-3, the Community Partnership to Expand MWEE in Lancaster City provided innovative environmental science education programs to more than 950 under-served middle school students and their families. Through systematic implementation of Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences, this 3-year, federally-funded program involved cooperation from 7 public and non-profit organizations and served 5 schools. This partnership effort helped to fill the gaps in environmental science education left by a global pandemic and forever changed the approach of classroom lessons all while introducing hundreds of families to local parks and greenspaces.

Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation
“Rescue Ready”
Program Manager: Tammy Agesen, CPRE
Rescue Ready is the successful lifeguard recruitment tool that saved Lancaster County Swimming Pool from being closed for the past two summers due to lack of staff. Working collaboratively with administrators from J.P. McCaskey High School, Lancaster County Day, the YMCA of the Roses and local organizations, Rescue Ready identified potential lifeguard candidates and removed the economic barriers that may have prevented these youth from being gainfully employed as lifeguards—such as transportation, certifications, and uniforms. The result of this program was that over 38 new lifeguards were recruited and hired and ensured that our summer seasons were successful! Much more than a means of employee recruitment, it is an investment in the community’s youth and their future.

Lancaster Recreation Commission
“Lancaster Beer Gardens”
Agency Director: Heather Dighe, MAED, CPRP
Program Director: Jack Bingeman
Lancaster Beer Gardens has quickly become a popular family friendly attraction in the city of Lancaster. Partnering with local entertainment venue, Tellus 360, the Lancaster Rec provided a traveling, pop up bar, showcasing the local parks. The Lancaster Beer Gardens not only highlighted local parks, but featured different local restaurants and food trucks, treating attendees to a variety of options. Whether it’s the beautiful green space, time spent with friends or great drinks, Lancaster Beer Gardens brought the community together.
EXCELLENCE IN RECREATION AND PARKS

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation
“Camp Philly”
Commissioner: Orlando F. Rendon, Jr.
Deputy Commission of Programs: Bill Salvatore, CPRP
Assistant Director: John Murawski
Camp Philly is a unique opportunity for Philadelphia children from the ages of 8 to 12 to attend a FREE, overnight camping week in the Pocono Mountains. For most campers, this is their first experience camping, swimming in a lake and being away from home. Camp Philly takes place on the magnificent 40-acre property of Camp Speers located in Dingman’s Ferry. We believe that every child deserves an over night camp experience to enjoy all that nature has to offer. We feel that this experience helps foster the sense of pride in and love for the love of nature in the next generation of park goes.

Pottstown Parks & Recreation
“Manatawny Green Spooky Golf 2023”
Agency Director: Michael Lenhart, CPRP, CPSI
Program Leader: Andie Graham, M.Ed., CPRP
Pottstown Parks and Recreation operates an 18-hole, ADA-accessible miniature golf course, Manatawny Green, as part of the park system. Built on a vacant industrial site in the downtown gateway district, it was envisioned as a means invigorate blighted industrial property, reclaim greenspace, and provide a low-cost, family-friendly activity for residents and visitors from neighboring communities. Although Manatawny Green’s business model has struggled through its first 10 years of operation, surviving floods, a pandemic, and a third-party lease, the 2023 season concluded with a hugely successful, multiple-day event for Halloween, Manatawny Green Spooky Golf. The program ran extended evening hours with spooky decorations and sound and lighting effects designed and implemented by Borough staff. The event brought 300+ visitors to the facility over 4 evenings of operation, accounting for 13% of 2023 sales. Dozens of families and friends from throughout the greater metropolitan region were drawn to Pottstown for the event, which showcased an original municipal amenity enhanced through the hard-work and ingenuity of the staff.

Upper Allen Township Parks Department
“Certified Autism Center”
Agency Director: Chad Krebs, CPRP, CPSI
The Upper Allen Township Parks Department is the first municipal park agency in Pennsylvania to earn Certified Autism Center (CAC) designation from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). A CAC is a facility or organization in which at least 80% of their staff is highly trained, fully equipped, and certified in the field of autism. Every CAC facility ensures that families with autism and other sensory disorders are properly accommodated.

Upper Gwynedd Township
“Unplugged Week”
Agency Director: Sarah A Prebis, CPRP
Program Leader: Leigha Adduci Getty
Unplugged Week is a week-long event that helps families put down their electronics and come recreate with Upper Gwynedd Township. We utilize all aspects of our township such as the parks, police, waste water treatment plant, administrative staff and public works staff. We do everything from Family Gaga, to a tour of our Waste Water Treatment Facility, to Crafting with the Commissioners, to Mosaics with the Manager. Residents have a chance to see all aspects of their community during this week.

GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE PARK AWARD
Dover Township Parks & Recreation
Eagle View Park
Agency Director: Chalet Harris, CPSI
Dover Township’s Eagle View Park leverages ecological restoration to service the community by enhancing connectivity, resiliency, water quality and recreational opportunities. The new park contains a pavilion, outdoor fireplace adjacent to sledding hills, outdoor classroom, and 54 of a mile of walking trails and bridges connecting the park to Dover Area Middle School in neighboring Dover Borough. The park includes a 10-acre wildflower meadow and a 5-acre restored floodplain wetland system. Two unnamed tributaries to Fox Run flow through the heart of the park. Floodplain restoration practices carried out along these tributaries manage stormwater associated with the park improvements, improve regional water quality, increase local flood resiliency, and enhance recreational and educational opportunities. The ecological enhancements entailed restoring 3,440 feet of degraded stream channel, creating 5 acres of critical wetland habitat, and establishing a 10-acre wildflower meadow buffer around the floodplain wetland.

COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARDS
Bryan Benson
Moon Parks & Recreation
Bryan Benson, a vital member of our Public Works team, exceeds expectations in his role. Whether as Santa Claus at festive events, transforming spaces into winter wonderlands with light displays, or spearheading the successful “Wheels, Wings & Wishes” initiative, he epitomizes community engagement. Bryan's tireless efforts raised over $218,500 for Make-A-Wish, granting 47 wishes, aligning seamlessly with PRPS goals. As a true Community Champion, Bryan Benson's impact on our community is profound.