

ANNUAL REPORT 2008 - 2009



411 Office Plaza Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32301-2756
(850) 878-3221 ~ Fax (850) 942-0712
www.frpa.org

PRESIDENT

Jim Sheets, CPRP

This past year has been very productive for our FRPA. Association operations have been streamlined and improved in order to provide the best possible service to you the member. Improvements include a the electronic FRPA Journal, P&Resource monthly electronic newsletters, the updated FRPA Website, E-lets, and E-clips. All of these changes were created to improve communications with our membership and Advocate for the field.

On the leadership front, our State Board team worked diligently on the three (3) year Vision Plan for the Association, a document that was developed through the hard work of the membership and the State Board. Through the input of the membership, we were able to establish this work plan for FRPA that focused on member services, advocacy, and professional development. I am proud of my team in fulfilling the 1st year of the plan and look forward to assisting with years 2 & 3 of our Vision for FRPA.

As President, I was able to work closely with the State Executive Board and State Office staff in representing our association at a variety of meetings, functions, and conference calls over the past year. It has been an honor working with this board of directors over the past year. I am certain that President Elect, T. Michael Stavres will continue to Dream Believe and Achieve as he provided leadership over the upcoming year. Listed below are the meetings I participated in over the past year.

Meetings Attended in 2008-2009:

NRPA Congress, Baltimore – October 2008

- Attended Council of State Affiliated Presidents
- Attend Sharing Session with State Associations Executive Directors
- Attended Southern Council Region Annual Meeting

FRPA Southeast Region Meeting, Tamarac – October 2008

- Attended Directors Sharing Session
- Visited with Region Board Members

FRPA Southwest Region Meeting, Fort Myers – October 2008

- Attended Directors Sharing Session

Volusia County Directors Consortium – November 2008

- Attended Volusia County Directors Meeting
- Provided FRPA Report to Directors Group

FRPA Foundation Board Meeting, Orlando – November 2008

- Attended Foundation Board Planning Retreat Meeting

FRPA Central Region Meeting, Kissimmee – November 2008

- Attended Directors Sharing Session
- Visited with Region Board Members

FRPA State Board Meeting, Sanford – November 2008

- Conducted 1st State Board meeting of 2008-2009 Presidency

FRPA Finance Oversight Committee Meeting, Tallahassee – March 2009

- FY09-10 Budget Meeting, and review of upcoming 2009 State Board Retreat

FRPA Agency Summit, Altamonte Spring – March 2009

- Worked with Directors Committee Chair on the Summit
- Provided FRPA report to Directors
- Accepted sponsorship from FRPA Foundation on behalf of FRPA

FRPA State Board Retreat, Haines City – May 2009

- Adopted FY09-10 Budget
- Reviewed progress of 2008-2009 FRPA Vision Plan
- Worked on adjustments to the 2009-2010 Vision Plan
- Conducted 2nd State Board meeting of 2008-2009 Presidency

Status of Goals and Objectives:

▶ **Attend and participate in all NRPA required functions.**

Attended 2008 NRPA Annual Congress in Baltimore with Executive Director, Eleanor Warmack. VP of Advocacy, Kathy Margoles, was approved to represent FRPA at NRPA Mid-Year in Washington.

▶ **Attend and participate in all FRPA required functions.**

Attended region meetings including the Central, Southeast, and Southwest Regions. These region visits allowed us time to meet with the region memberships, and agency directors in each region to discuss issues relative to our association, services deliverables, and future FRPA initiatives.

▶ **Monitor, contribute to and assist with the implementation of the current Vision Plan for 2008-09 & beyond.**

Conducted monthly conference calls with board to track progress of the work within the 2008-2009 Vision Plan.

Worked with **Young Professionals Work Group** tracking progress of this work group as per Vision Plan. This group will provided report to State Board during the annual retreat as specified in the Vision Plan.

Worked with **Citizens Task Force** tracking progress of this work group as per Vision plan. This group will provided report to State Board during the annual retreat as specified in the Vision Plan.

Completed work on the 2008-2009 FRPA Vision Plan along with Executive Board and State Office staff. President Elect will continue work on the 2009-1010 plan as developed at the Annual Board Retreat in May 2009. Work at the Annual Retreat included review and preparation for the Vision Plan in 2000-2010 and beyond.

VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE and PRESIDENT ELECT T. Michael Stavres, CPRP

Much of my time during the first half of the 2008/2009 Operating Year focused on monitoring, assessing and tweaking the Association budget in light of our national, state and local economies and their respective direct and indirect influence on FRPA. Overall, we had a positive year with respect to fiscal operations thanks in part to the ongoing work of the Region Directors and their efforts to meet their financial goals. To Lanie Sheets, Kim Sanderson, Fred Couceyro and Michael Kalvort, thank you. Furthermore, our partnership with NRPA on the delivery of the Certified Playground Safety Inspector program and our own State-Wide Workshops also again proved financially beneficial during the past 12 months.

The Financial Oversight Committee met in March 2009 to review and finalize the budget proposal for the 2009/2010 Fiscal Year, which was presented to the Board at the Annual Retreat in May. Again, the economy and its impact on the availability of local training and membership dollars were of significant concern. The FOC took a conservative approach to the budget, while still focusing on ensuring the Associations ability to meet the service needs of the membership. I am confident that as a result of these efforts and the ever-impressive insight of our Executive Director, FRPA is financially well-prepared for the coming year. I particularly want to thank Jim Sheets, Greg Scott, Leah Hoffman, Chip Potts, Lucille Kreider and Kathie Margoles for their involvement in our budget development efforts.

Beyond this, my role during the past year took a major turn in late March with the unfortunate resignation of President Elect Leah Hoffman. Leah's commitment to the Association and the profession is as impressive as anyone's and there is little doubt that she would have made an outstanding President for FRPA. As a result of her resignation, I assumed the role of President Elect just a few weeks prior to the Annual Board Retreat, thus my focus quickly shifted towards preparing for the coming year from a different seat at the table. I feel that we had an outstanding Retreat that helped lay the groundwork for the year ahead. I particularly want to thank Eleanor Warmack for her countless hours of communication and collaboration leading up to the Retreat and also Rich Thompson, the facilitator of our FRPA MRI exercise. We are healthy! As for those Retreat attendees that participated in the Karaoke, it's a good thing you are highly skilled in parks, recreation and leisure (despite Fred Couceyro's vocal prowess).

I am excited about the opportunities that the coming year has in store for FRPA and am thrilled to be working with the Board that will be installed at the 2009 Conference. I am confident that, collectively, we as an Association have a tremendous opportunity to further our profession in the year to come.

The 2008-2009 year began with a financially successful 2008 Conference. Close monitoring of the budget was facilitated by the Financial Oversight Committee throughout the year. Fiscal Year 2008-2009 ended June 30, 2008 with the following:

Expenses: \$ 796,671
Revenues: \$ 790,636
Net Loss: \$ 6,035

*Note: Much of the deficit is due to the implementation of the FRPA Webinars, which was in response to requests from members who felt travel and training budgets would prohibit them from traveling to Region meetings. The setup and implementation fees exceeded registrations, and changes to that program have been made as a result.

Cash on Hand Report

Total Cash Funds as of June 30, 2009: \$ 396,674
Operating Funds: \$ 209,394
Contingency Fund: \$ 186,280

The following is the 2009-2010 State Operating Budget as adopted by the FRPA Board of Directors at the May 2009 Annual Retreat.

Revenues: \$ 770,390
Expenses: \$ 770,174
Projected Net Profit: \$ 216

NOTE: The Board will address any adjustments to the adopted budget at the conclusion of the 2008-2009 audit, and the 2009 Annual Conference. Close monitoring of the budget will be a priority this year in order to make adjustment early and protect the resources of the Association.

PAST PRESIDENT/AWARDS

W. Greg Scott, CPRP

This year, I worked with Karen Palus and staff to fine tune the 2009 Awards submission forms and score sheets for the Association.

The Awards Committee met initially via conference call to discuss the Awards process. The award nominations were individually scored and the results will be presented at the Banquet and Installation Ceremony.

The Awards Committee would like to encourage all members to be active in the awards nominating process. There are many individuals deserving recognition, and numerous agencies whose activities warrant awards as well. The 2010 Awards nomination forms should be available in early 2010 and we hope to see an increase in all categories of submissions.

As Past President, I performed my duties as a member of the Financial Oversight Committee, Personnel Committee and Board of Directors as needed.

ADVOCACY

VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVOCACY

Kathie Margoles, CPRP

2009 Legislative Priorities

- Funding for Land Acquisition and Development
- Funding for Local Governments
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Protection of Staff, Volunteers, and Participants
- Access to Public Facilities

This has been another difficult year for parks and recreation on the state and local level. Major highlights for FRPA was the passage of the public records exemption bill which prohibits the release of personal identification information on children enrolled in local parks and recreation agencies. Despite the best efforts of our lobbyist, Lester Abberger, and FRPA Executive Director, Eleanor Warmack, major "lowlights" include no funding for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, and no funding for Florida Forever. Both programs were left with zero funding for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. This year FRPA members were able to follow legislative action through the E-Alerts on the FRPA webpage and emailed to members. This was enormously helpful.

On the local level, FRPA has been following the ups and downs of local agencies and transmitted that to members through the E-Clips, also available on the webpage and by email. The FRPA E-clips is an electronic communication of news clippings from around

the State of Florida and the United States. Topics relative to the field of parks and recreation are highlighted in order to provide information to professionals, and hopefully to create dialogue within the profession.

On the national level, I attended the NRPA Legislative Forum in Washington DC in March 2009. A small but dedicated group of Florida parks and recreation professionals visited legislators on Capitol Hill and attended educational sessions. The Recovery Act information was disseminated and follow-up was promised by NRPA.

FRPA Strategic Plan

Legislative Committee- Shorty Robbins

Marketing Committee - Terri Messler

Directors Committee- Lynn Rives

The first year Strategic Element Plans were generally completed.

Advocacy Education: Agencies were surveyed on It Starts in Parks utilization. New education and training needs were identified and are in the process of development. A survey was conducted to determine what online resources were desired on current legislative issues.

Web resources: Directors were surveyed regarding resources that could be posted on the FRPA website. Some documents have been posted.

Optimizing Retired Professionals: Recommendations were presented at the FRPA Retreat in May from the Citizens Work Group led by Steve Miller. Tasks were assigned in the upcoming Year Two of the Strategic Plan to develop resources for Citizen Board training and information. A professional Task Force will review the recommendations and develop possible strategies for implementation given the current fiscal constraints.

Year Two of the Strategic Plan will see an effort to define the role of Regional Directors of Advocacy and utilize local visits after 2010 election. This is the most critical opportunity for advocacy in the upcoming year. In 2010 more than half of the House and Senate, all of the Cabinet, and the Governor's office is up for grabs. It is going to be critical that our folks get to know their candidates back at home, and elect park-minded people. This is also a wise approach at the local level.

On a personal note, I will be leaving the FRPA Board at conference this year. I have been the Chair of the Directors Committee, the Legislative Committee and Vice President of Advocacy. I am proud to have served such a noble cause with my fellow professionals.

DIRECTOR'S COMMITTEE

Lynn Rives, CPRP

The Agency Summit Was held on March 26-27, 2009 in Altamonte Springs with 55 attendees. John Spence was the featured speaker for the two day summit. Attendance

mirrored the prior year. Attendees evaluated the education very high and continuation of Summit is felt to be essential. The summit generated \$ 6,300 in sponsorship.

Directors Day at the annual conference is scheduled for Tuesday August 25, 2009.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Shorty Robbins, CPRP

The FRPA e-lets provided by staff have been a successful tool to communicate to the membership through this difficult legislative session. Overall, the session was as expected during this economic crisis. FRDAP was not funded, however the line was left in the budget and applications will be accepted this fiscal year in the hopes of the program being re-funded in 2010-11.

Locally, agencies have identified many strategies to stretch resources. Implementing and/or raising fees, developing partnerships with non-profit agencies, and other creative cost-cutting measures have been implemented in order to continue to provide programs to our customers without significantly cutting back service levels. Other agencies have cut hours, and are considering implementation of furloughs in order to avoid layoffs.

Largely, the significant work done by FRPA leadership and membership to identify and validate the benefits we provide through public recreation programs has educated local government leaders to keep our agencies from drastic cuts.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Terri Messler, CPRP

What an exciting year to serve as the Marketing Committee Chair for the Florida Recreation and Park Association. I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Florida is setting the curve for parks, recreation and leisure service professional associations nationwide through our "It Starts In Parks!" program.

The "It Starts In Parks!" program continues to build momentum. The latest phase of this successful mechanism for marketing our profession is the development of four new training modules. These new modules focus on the "It Starts In Parks!" messages of improving the health of communities, the achievement and success of our youth, the conservation of nature and open spaces, and the economic asset to a community and region afforded by park and recreation resources. This phase of the program focuses upon moving the messages related to "It Starts In Parks!" into implementation and action at the community level. The action-oriented outcomes detailed within the modules collectively focus upon the critical and essential role that parks and recreation plays in Florida's future.

These four new modules were introduced at the FRPA 2009 Annual Conference. Additional sessions offered at Conference were the Introduction to "It Starts In Parks!" and Programs that Rock: A Showcase of the Best of the Best programs.

It is important that we continue to promote the value of parks, recreation and open space in our communities and our state. "It Starts In Parks!" is the perfect tool to help us do just that.

Remember, Florida's Future . . . It Starts In Parks!

MEMBER RESOURCES

VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBER RESOURCES

Lucille Vaillancourt-Kreider, CPRP

Member Resources has had a challenging year with the economy in such a state that it is. We managed to continue to recruit new membership and focus on completing tasks assigned to Year 1 of the Visioning Plan. Web Resources was the focus of Year 1 and many changes have occurred on the FRPA website to help navigate users and provide the membership with more information at their fingertips.

Among some of the changes, the website is now housing documents for programming, standard documents for fees and charges, legal documents and has created a facility search mechanism for comparing facilities. Many members are now participating in a professional forum called LinkedIn.com where professionals can share resources and information pertinent to the Recreation and Parks Profession. FRPA has a group set up on LinkedIn.com to share information on FRPA annual conference and other issues which face FRPA.

I look forward to working for the membership next year in focusing on Year 2 of the Vision plan and providing necessary services the membership is seeking during these tough economic times.

CENTRAL REGION

Lanie Sheets, CPRP

The Central Region again had a good year of education and networking. The following locations graciously offered to host Central Region Meetings during the year including the Kissimmee Civic Center, Temple Terrace Family Recreation Complex, and Dunedin Community Center. The assistance and generosity of the staff at these facilities is greatly appreciated. Unfortunately, the Temple Terrace meeting was cancelled due to low enrollment.

The support of our commercial vendors through sponsorships was again extremely successful! We had a huge success with a combined 20 vendor registrations at 2 meetings. In addition, the donations from these commercial vendors to the silent auction contributed additional funds.

The Central Region is continuing their partnership with the Tampa Bay Rays with two "Parks and Recreation Days" at Tropicana Field. Annually, over 13,000 summer camp children from around the state enjoy a great day at the ball park. Thank you to all of the area camp programs who participate in this field trip opportunity which helps to fund the regional education and scholarship funds.

The Central Region accomplished the annual goals such as providing a variety of educational sessions, maintaining regular correspondence, welcoming new members, maintaining commercial partnerships, and promoting "It Starts In Parks" along with other advocacy efforts. I give my sincerest appreciation to the entire region board for all of their dedication and efforts. They are truly a phenomenal group of dedicated professionals.

NORTHERN REGION

Kim Sanderson, CPRP

The Northern Region started off the "educational year" with sessions planned in Jacksonville, Tallahassee, and Pensacola. Unfortunately, the participation numbers were not adequate to deliver the sessions in Pensacola. This is a disappointment for the Region as we were able to provide educational classes for our members, yet members for one reason or another were unable or unwilling to attend.

This will also affect our financial status as we were not able to bring in the revenue we had originally projected.

On a positive note, we look forward to the leadership of Jeff Moffitt to take over as Director with new and innovative ideas to regain the participation of the Northern Region. Through his leadership, the Northern Region hopes to once again fulfill the goals of providing not only financial stability for the Region, provide quality continuing education at an economical price and in a geographically realistic location but to maintain current membership and continue to recruit additional members.

SOUTHEAST REGION

Fred Couceyro, CPRP

The SE Region enjoyed another fine year of programming in 2008-2009. The Region Board had a goal to present many educational and networking opportunities and with 3 region meetings, a holiday luncheon, a turf rodeo, a vendor's expo and a golf tournament we strived to do just that.

In spite of the tough economical conditions, we were still very successful on the financial front. The SE Region raised approximately \$13,000 in net revenues. This is a decrease from last year, but still an impressive profit number. We must thank our sponsors who supported us at all of our events:

REP Services
Musco Sports Lighting
Leisure Grants Services
Recreation Construction and Design
Southeastern Group
S&S Worldwide
Playmore Recreation
Creative Playgrounds
Twilight Features
Bliss Products and Services
National Alliance for Youth Sports

Also, I must offer a large amount of thanks to *Linda Goberna*, our Treasurer, She has been extremely vigilant in overseeing our financial processes, and without her, I would truly be "lost at sea" in regards to these processes. A wonderful aspect of the successful year we had is that we have funds available to allocate towards scholarships and also for speakers at next year's region meetings.

Of course, the backbone of involvement in FRPA for most members are the educational offerings we provide. For three different Region Meetings, the Region offers a varied and diverse slate of sessions designed to assist you in your professional lives. Our Directors of Professional Development, *Kara Petty*, and *Gayle Vasile*, worked tirelessly to perform the task of putting these meeting together. I believe this is the most challenging position anyone can have at the Region level, and I thank them wholeheartedly for their wonderful efforts.

Again I think it is important to recognize those agencies that provide locations for our various region activities. Their support underlines all of our success. Special thanks to *Tamarac, Sunny Isles, Wellington, Broward County, Ft. Lauderdale, Plantation*, for making us feel welcome.

I am proud of the continued charitable efforts we provide to Family Central. Again this year the attendees at the Holiday Party donated dozens and dozens of toys for children who would otherwise not receive any gifts during the holiday season.

I also would like to mention volunteers that have served on the Region Board and have also lent valuable time and effort to our cause. *Stacie Barrett* served as an organizer of the Vendor's Expo, *Don Decker* became my emergency rescue guy and pulled off a golf tournament in just a few weeks with the help of a few motivated members. *Jeff Meehan* and his crew at Ft. Lauderdale did a wonderful job with the Turf Rodeo. *Amy Blackman* continued to work on member services and constantly was reaching out to members to ensure member retention. There are several other members that have

participated on committees, or served as speakers or volunteers at Region Meetings, and I thank you all for your participation. I would also like to commend our staff our staff in Tallahassee. We are blessed to have an outstanding Executive Director in *Eleanor Warmack*. I am continually in awe at what she is able to accomplish. And, I'm sure she places as much value in her staff; *Lori Womack & Amber Bulloch* who have provided me with immeasurable help in the last year.

My first year as a SE Region Director has been enjoyable, challenging, and rewarding all at once. The relationships I have made and continue to forge with fellow professionals are invaluable in both a professional and personal sense. I believe that the upcoming year will continue to be successful on all these fronts. This year, we have a wonderful schedule of activities to present, and I will work with our upcoming Director-elect *Michelle Zimmer*, as she prepares for 2010-2011.

SOUTHWEST REGION

Michael Kalvort, CPRP

2009 was an extremely successful year for the entire Southwest Region. The Region celebrated many accomplishments which included:

- Two (2) Region meetings held with a total of 20 classes and 1.9 ceu's offered
- 147 individual registrations were accepted for both Region meetings
- Four (4) Region Conference call Board meetings were held
- 11 sponsors were attained for both Region meetings
- Profit exceeded established budget
- Two individual It Starts in Parks Activities were held including a scavenger hunt and a Family Feud Style Game show which incorporated a survey which was distributed Region Wide
- Many Region Board members were also active on other National Professional Organization's Boards

As I wrap up my two year tenure as Region Director, I would like to thank many people who have made it an honor and pleasure to serve the Region. These people have worked countless hours and I have enjoyed developing great friendships and professional relationships with them. Andrea King, Director of Professional Development, Jonathan Poyner, Treasurer, Ed Torroni, Membership, and Kathy Cahill, Director Elect, have been a terrific team who always provided great guidance, support, and assistance. Lucille Valliancourt-Kreider, Lynn Clarke, Tim Eckert, Steve Cox, Michelle Dean, Nancy Macphee, Bob Greene, Bill Ward, Mindy Matusiak, Bob Burns, Keith Locklin, and Vicki Little are all passionate members who have also contributed their time and efforts for the past year.

I can not thank the State Board enough for all their assistance and dedication. Jim Sheets and Greg Scott were tremendous Presidents and I could not have served under two better professionals. Their decisions have made both the State and the SW Region stronger. Leah Hoffman provided much support and helped us set attainable goals. T-Michael Stavres guidance thru the budget process has not only tightened up spending,

but has proved that he will be an excellent President. The State Office staff has always responded quickly and professionally and has enabled the board to quickly react to issues. Lori and Amber have been fantastic surrogate SW Region Members and their help has been immeasurable.

Eleanor has been a great sounding board and leader. I would not have been able to provide a direction and vision for the Region without her wisdom. I will miss our conversations and know that her help will make the Region under Kathy's administration bigger and better.

Finally, our membership deserves the biggest thank you. The Southwest Members have been very faithful and participatory. They have attended meetings in great number and have helped whenever asked. It does not matter if one donates many hours to the Association, or if one merely registers for one class, every action is a brick which has enabled the Region to meet and exceed goals.

FRPA will succeed due to the combined passion our members. I wish to leave you all with a quote which typifies why our fellow FRPA professionals are some of the best in the Nation. "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." I have yet to encounter a Region or State Board member who was not extremely happy to make a lasting contribution to our profession and association. It's been a thrill and I thank you all.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Michelle Zimmer, CPRP

THANK YOU TO OUR RECRUITERS

Mark Cagle – 1
Kathy Cahill – 1
Cindy Casanova – 5
Bruce Councilman – 1
Steve Cox – 1
Timothy Eckert – 1
Shari Ferguson – 1
Jerris Foote – 3
Keliann Gerlach – 1
Edit Guerra – 1
Jeremy Hockenbury – 1
Linda Karch – 1
Sidney Kittila – 1
Robert LeFever – 1
Mark Litwhiler – 1

Kathy Loomis – 1
Wendy Mages – 1
Kathie Margoles – 2
David Miller – 1
Mary Nolen – 1
George Parrado – 1
Gina Peebles – 1
Rosemary Prince – 1
Kerry Runyon – 1
Shannon Ryan – 1
Jim Sheets – 1
Brian Smatt – 1
Lucille Vaillancourt-Kreider – 1
Gayle Vasile – 2
James Wormley – 3

FLORIDA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

Membership Totals by Category and Region

as of 8/2/2009

Membership Categories	Regions					Totals by Category:
	Northern	Central	Southeast	Southwest	Out of State	
P (0-24,999)	3	12	8	2	0	25
P (25,000-44,999)	39	119	76	24	2	260
P (45,000+)	37	73	141	34	0	285
P (Agency Mbr Comps)*	17	50	68	16	0	151
P (Flat Rate Silver)+	20	78	158	0	0	256
P (Flat Rate Gold)++	0	19	25	114	0	158
ASSC (Associate)	0	0	0	0	15	15
S (Student)	19	8	7	0	1	35
R (Retired Professional)	4	14	7	5	0	30
CIT (Citizen)	7	10	9	1	0	27
LIFE (Lifetime)	8	6	3	1	2	20
CP (Commercial Prof.)**	5	41	25	7	19	97
AM (Bronze)	10	29	30	6	0	75
AM (Silver)	3	10	14	0	0	27
AM (Gold)	0	1	2	3	0	6
CM (Emerald)	5	27	16	5	14	67
CM (Sapphire)	0	1	1	1	1	4
Totals by Region:	177	498	590	219	54	1,538

* This category represents individuals whose membership is complimentary with the Bronze, Silver and Gold Memberships.

** This category represents some commercial professionals who receive a complimentary membership as part of an Emerald, Sapphire or Diamond Membership.

+ This category represents members who are employed by Silver Member Agencies.

++ This category represents members who are employed by Gold Member Agencies.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

VICE PRESIDENT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Chip Potts, CPRP

It has been a very busy, yet very productive year in the area of professional development for the association. A number of new initiatives have been undertaken this year, and a few more planned for the upcoming year, that will go a long way to serve the membership through educational and experiential means. These include the delivery of educational topics through webinars; the completion of year one, and development of year two of the Joe Abrahams Leadership Academy; the creation of an educational programming database; and, the development of an emerging professionals program and a professional mentoring program on the horizon.

- Earlier this year, in an effort to bring the desired education and training to our membership in these changing times, FRPA responded to the input of its members and began offering web based training covering a variety of topics. The list of topics can be found on the website and allows the user to access training right from their desktop or in a conference room with a group of people. Additionally, at the current time FRPA is working with other state associations to offer training to their membership as well to help offset costs and produce additional revenues. I encourage the membership to take a look at the topics and experience the ease at which training can be brought to you with no travel time or expense involved!
- After a long and thorough process of development and recruitment, the first year of the initial Joe Abrahams Leadership Academy was presented at State Conference 2008 with much success and positive feedback from the participants. Thirty-nine professionals from around the state made a three day commitment to better themselves through intense workshops, homework and self realization of their strengths and weaknesses to take their skills, and careers to the next level. With year one in the books, a majority of participants have registered for year two and look forward to becoming the first "graduating" class. In addition, subsequent to year two, a new crop of professionals are preparing themselves for their own journey as the second offering of the Academy will take place at this years state conference here at Coronado Springs.
- One of the more exciting achievements to come out of the Professional Development branch has been from the Training and Education Committee with the development of an education program database. The database was identified as a priority at the annual board retreat in 2008 and finally came to fruition in April of this year and was utilized by the Region Program Directors at the retreat to plan the region meetings for the coming year. Essentially the database is an ever evolving resource that includes program ideas for conference, region meetings, webinars, journal articles, etc. that programmers can go to for ideas and speakers when needed. With the goal of the database to

be filled with great topics and ideas that are crucial to our profession and accessible to all regions, it is important for everyone to provide input with ideas or speakers that can continually enhance what is offered. If you have a great idea for a topic, or can suggest an area and description of a training area of need...please forward it on the Lori at the state office.

- Finally, looking forward over the next year there are a few more exciting prospects for the membership that will be developed to assist in your career development. One is the creation of an emerging professionals program that will be similar in structure to the Abrahams Academy, but be programmed specifically to meet the needs of the younger, newer professionals in our field. From this program, which would become a precursor to the Abrahams Academy, these young professionals will begin to identify the necessary skills that will provide them a foundation to further their development. The second exciting goal for 2010 will be the development of a professional mentoring program. This program will match up participants with other individuals in the profession based on their goals and levels of experience in an effort to provide them with the "hands on" training that is sometimes difficult to find or initiate.

2009 CONFERENCE

Don Decker, CPRP and Kara Petty, CPRP

A year and a half of planning has culminated with the Dream~Believe~Achieve 2009 FRPA State Conference. Inspired by Jim Sheets to make things happen, McDreamy (everyone's favorite light bulb) made his first appearance at the 2008 State Conference. Since then he has travelled the world searching for inspiration to make this conference a true success.

While the results of our work remain to be seen we have been inspired by the teamwork of our Conference Committee. They have remained true to our vision, even in challenging economic times. We thank them all for their commitment in the year leading up to this week in addition to their hard work and countless hours on site at the Coronado Springs Resort.

We thank our sponsors and corporate partners who have once again showed their tireless support for our membership. Standing with us even when times are tough is a testament to their commitment and we encourage our membership to keep that in mind.

Finally, we thank Eleanor and Lori for their leadership and direction. It is said year in and year out, but it bears repeating; they keep us moving forward and we appreciate their encouragement.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Eleanor Warmack, CPRP, CAE

The 2008-2009 year has presented its share of challenges, and I am very pleased to report that the Association has addressed each head on, and the result is a solid organization that is focused on serving its membership.

Priorities were set early in the year by the Board when they adopted the 2008-2009 Vision Plan. Several key initiatives involving our Young Professionals and Citizens have been discussed in the reports of our Vice Presidents. Staff has worked diligently to also address the continued enhancement and delivery of services to the membership.

Over 26 issues of the FRPA E-clips were produced and distributed. This electronic document provides a tremendous glimpse at what is happening around the State and in some cases the nation. Eleven issues of the FRPA E-lets advocacy publication were distributed, highlighting legislative activities and advocacy information post-session. The P&Resource electronic newsletter was published 12 times this year. All of these efforts were to continue to frequently communicate important news to the membership. We hope you have enjoyed these informational documents.

In response to requests from the membership, the Board directed staff to move forward with the development of a series of Webinar education sessions that could be delivered to a member's computer, when anticipated travel and training budgets were reduced. A partnership was entered into with several other state park and recreation associations, with the hope that costs could be decreased. We were also pleased to have two very generous sponsors – Musco Sports Lighting, and REP Services – step up to sponsor this year's series. Several pricing strategies were implemented, however registration for the webinars has been far less than what we had anticipated based on the requests from the membership to implement the service. As a result, the Board after evaluating the financial risk that would occur if we continued to move forward with webinar development, a decision was made to pre-record the webinars and offer them as archived live sessions – these are now available on the FRPA Website for a minimal charge.

FRPA is now LinkedIn, and is moving forward with continuing to enhance our Social Marketing reach. Our Young Professionals will be integral in our moving forward with the very intentional goal of reaching the membership, potential members, and the public with messages that advance the field of parks and recreation.

The FRPA Foundation has been critical in our moving forward with a second year of the Joe Abrahams Leadership Academy. Their very generous support represents conscious re-investment of their finances in the professionals who support them. The Trustees are a dedicated group of individuals working in their valuable spare time to raise funds so that the Association can continue to achieve our advocacy and training/education goals. Please remember to support the Foundation. Every gift makes a difference.

Membership has declined this year, as we expected it would. We need the assistance of every member to talk to members who are lapsing, and those professionals who are considering membership. You are our best ambassadors to communicate the value of

FRPA membership. We are relying on our supportive membership to assist us in maintaining and recruiting members. So, take a few minutes each week to talk to someone about the value you have received from FRPA.

A major initiative undertaken this year, included our Training and Education Committee – a small but mighty group – working toward the compilation of a publication of education sessions, concepts, articles, etc., which represents core competency areas for the field. The database of programs will constantly be refined and enhanced. The Regions will be utilizing that database to complete their educational offerings at Region meetings. We will also be keying in on several important issues arising from the Committee's work, for articles on the FRPA website and in the FRPA Journal. This Committee will continue to be a vital force in addressing the educational needs of our membership.

Taking advantage of the downturn in the hotel industry, we have moved forward with selecting conference locations through 2017. Contracts have been signed in two year increments for the Caribe Royale Resort, the Hilton Bonnett Creek, the Orlando Hilton, and again the Caribe Royale Resort. Room rates in some years are lower than rates at this year's conference. The square footage requirements of the conference make it a very large meeting, and thus we are limited to only a few locations that can accommodate our space needs, our rate needs, and provide delegates with an overall affordable experience. We look forward to hosting the conference at two new Orlando facilities, and the Hilton incentive packages will provide the Association with the ability to maximize the opportunity to keep costs at a minimum level.

This year's legislative session was not as positive as we would have liked, however, there were no adverse proposals passed either. The environment was dealt a major blow with the Florida Forever Program being left unfunded. This directly affects us through FRDAP project funding and Florida Communities Trust programs as well. While one could anticipate that the coming 2010 session will provide much of the same, an opportunity exists in the 2010 elections for all of us. More than half of the House and Senate will be up for election, the entire Cabinet will be overturned, and a new Governor will be elected. I can not say enough how important it is for all members to become involved in the upcoming elections. Get to know the candidates running for your state legislative and Cabinet offices. We need you to ask locally the questions that will allow you to assess which individuals are parks and recreation minded, and can provide support if elected to office.

We have an incredible asset in our lobbyist, Lester Abberger. He continues to work on our behalf and articulately communicates the messages that advance our mission. However, he needs our connections back at home to lay a foundation for he and I to work with once elected individuals arrive in Tallahassee. An opportunity to influence the future of Florida politics is at hand for us all, and now more than ever we need an active and engaged membership supporting our advocacy efforts at every level.

The membership is so fortunate to have a group of individuals leading the Association. Our 2008-2009 Board of Directors have worked throughout the year to focus on serving the members while preparing for continued economic challenges. A very lean budget

was approved at this year's Board Retreat, and the Board stands ready to make additional adjustments if need be. As is the case with many of you back at home, initial budget reductions allowed the Association to continue member services, holding staffing levels at a minimum and leaving a position vacant through the year. We will again be holding a position vacant in the FRPA Executive Office as we move into the next fiscal year. We remain optimistic that we can hold the line with providing quality service to the membership in 2009-2010.

Working side by side with the Board and myself, is a dedicated team of staff in the FRPA Executive Office. Lori Womack, Director of Professional Development; Amber Bulloch, Administrative Assistant; and, Carly Kirkland, Student Office Assistant, are an incredible team of individuals. Their creativity and resourcefulness continue to amaze me. Their optimistic approach and team centered philosophy are tremendous assets to the Association, and we are fortunate to have them all. Thank you team!

As we move into the next year, I am confident that our Board, our staff, and our membership will rise to the challenges that may lie ahead. February 2009 marked by 20th anniversary of serving as your Executive Director, and it is a pleasure to continue to serve in that capacity. In that time, I have seen the Association develop into one of the highest regarded park and recreation associations in the country, and equally regarded in the Association community. I remain committed to assuring that we move forward with achieving our goals as a committed, united Association. Together we will continue to prosper and thrive.

**NOMINATE A LEADER
FOR THE 2009-010 SLATE OF OFFICERS
Deadline: October 15, 2009**

Each year the Association seeks the best of the best for its class of nominees for office. This year is no different. There are many tremendously qualified individuals whose leadership skills could benefit FRPA. Nominate one of those individuals today. This year we will be seeking candidates as follows:

President Elect – serves as President Elect 2010-2011 and President 2011-2012

Vice President of Finance – serves 2010-2012

Vice President of Professional Development – serves 2010-2012

If you are willing to serve, or wish to nominate someone, please contact the FRPA Executive Office at eleonor@frpa.org.

Election Ballots will once again be available on-line during the month of December. Current members will be emailed a link to proceed to the voting function. Ballots will be made available to those wishing to vote by mail. Information on how to request a mailed ballot will be available in the P&Re-source newsletter during the months of November and December, so look for your instructions.