



# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY

SCOTT MORGAN, NRPS PRESIDENT

The Motto of our Nevada Recreation and Parks Society is “Strengthening Professionals for Today & Tomorrow”.

I've been thinking about how to embrace our motto and strengthen our professionals, especially coming out of the great recession, only to be faced with a national pandemic. As our world changes so must our profession. Many organizations in the State of Nevada have relied heavily on their Parks and Recreation departments, especially with those who are the very skilled, eager and able professionals and who have shown initiative and flexibility throughout their careers. Park and Recreation professionals are accustomed to doing more with less, creatively solving community problems and passionately serving others. I wish to thank you for your enduring dedication and commitment to your communities and our Society.

The Nevada Parks and Recreation Society (NRPS) is always been committed to strengthening you as professionals and this year is no different. Your membership in our Society entitles you to more than a discounted price at the annual conference. For those dedicated to advancing their careers and expanding their knowledge, multiple opportunities exist to promote your continued growth. Taking advantage of Lunch and Learns, LEAD training and social events provide networking opportunities that allow you to build relationships, meet other professionals who can help you solve problems, introduce you to people who can facilitate promotional opportunities or simply make friends with people who understand how demanding yet rewarding our profession can be.

Besides participating in leadership and educational opportunities there are many ways to further engage your profession. Becoming more involved in NRPS is one of them. Multiple opportunities await your involvement, including running for office and serving on the Board of Directors, volunteering to serve on a committee or using the skill you've acquired to teach or train others. As a Society we become stronger and better when more people become engaged.

Looking forward to your future involvement!

Scott Morgan

Community Services/Parks and Recreation Dir.

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Gardnerville, NV 89410

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# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## Get to Know Your Entry Level Leaders

The City of Henderson classifies their entry level leaders, or front-line supervisors, as Lead Recreation Assistants (LRA). This part-time position consists of a 29–38-hour work week, the supervision of other part-time staff, overseeing the facility, and is often the front-line personnel for all customer contact. Within your own agency, you may have a similar position. You may even know all their names. But how much more do you know about them—their thoughts and feelings of their own agency?

On my team, I do not have just 7 LRA's. I have 2 hard working moms, 1 college student, an aspiring entrepreneur, 2 women with over 20 years of experience in the City of Henderson, and 1 acrobat. You may be surprised that I know this information, and believe me, learning that one of my staff is a circus performer on his off time is quite the surprise. Knowing this information, has opened up something remarkable within our team.

Every month, I schedule out 30 minutes with each one of my LRA's to go over their goals, my goals for them, and to take a few minutes to get to know them beyond the workplace. At first, the conversations felt a little forced, and I could feel the awkwardness between the two of us. But after a few meetings, my staff looked forward to our discussions. They have come up with their own process improvements to improve our facility as well as new staff-taught classes. One of my staff has even become our designated designer for all the concept art we submit to our marketing department. Another has taken over the planning and execution of our monthly food drive, and 2 more have started their own staff-taught classes. I have even learned from them about what our facility was like pre-pandemic and together, and this opened a brain storming discussion on what we can do to bring patrons back to our center. Our initiatives turned from one mind to several minds, working together.

It is important to get to know your team because you will find out the best way to motivate each member. You will learn more about the intricate details of your building and can spawn a discussion on how to fix any issues by giving those who work under you the opportunity to have a voice in their own agency. I am very proud of my team and the work that I see them put in every day. I look forward to each one of their one-on-ones in my office, hearing about what's new with their kids or grandkids, and seeing them light up with they have a new idea for a program or event to bring to the facility. I see all of them becoming great leaders someday.





# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## “Fit But Not Forgotten Program” - City of Reno

A fantastic but underutilized veteran program is the Fit But Not Forgotten program with the City of Reno. It was created locally out of a need in the Reno area for a veteran’s fitness program through the Veterans Affairs office. It is a grant funded program made possible by the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare system and through a grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs for the Grants for Adaptive Sports Programs for Disabled Veterans and Disabled Members of the Armed Forces. To date according to April Wolfe there has been over 1000 veterans that have participated in the program. The program is designed for disabled veterans but any veteran is eligible as long as they are eligible for V.A health care. To participate in the program, participants need to attend four training classes over the course of a month. Those classes go over an orientation to the gym for upper body workouts, leg workouts, cardio and a spin/yoga class. Currently those classes are held on Thursdays at 12 pm and 5:30 pm or on Fridays at 10 am. Upon completion of all four classes, participants get a free 1-year membership to the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center, which includes the gym, water fitness, yoga and tai chi classes. Renewal is possible if the membership pass is active in the last 30 days prior to expiration and grant funding is continued from the VA. If the pass membership expires, the veteran is required to complete a 1-hour refresher course offered every Friday at noon. For more information, contact Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center at 775-334-2262.

**FIT BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

The City of Reno is proud to offer our Veterans weekly fitness classes in our facility weight room.

Classes will cover orientation to equipment, assessment of fitness level, proper technique to develop strength, endurance and flexibility, and discussion of fitness goals.

Upon completion of all four classes\*, participants will be eligible for a **FREE** one year, all inclusive facility membership.

Includes:

- Any water fitness
- Yoga classes
- Tai chi classes

\*Please come prepared to workout during the first class session.

This program is made possible by VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System and through a grant from the Nevada Department of Veterans Services.

**New sessions start the beginning of each month.**

**For more information about the program and how to register, call April Wolfe at 775-333-7765 or [WolfeA@Reno.Gov](mailto:WolfeA@Reno.Gov)**

Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center (EMNECC)  
1301 Valley Road Reno, NV 89512

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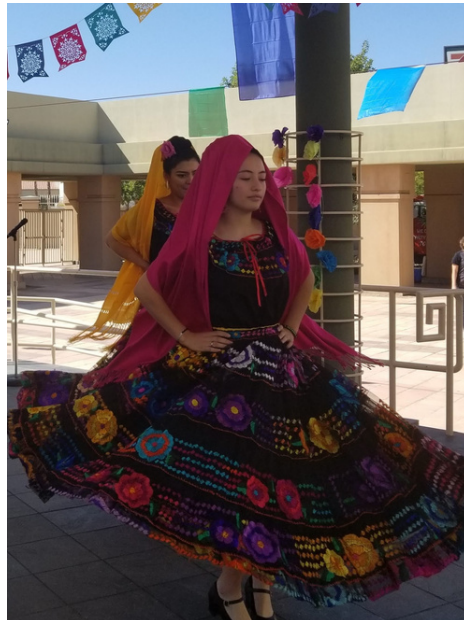
# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## Mexican Culture in Las Vegas

I still think it is funny when I am asked where I come from. The surprise that occurs when I say, “born and raised in Las Vegas”, still makes me giggle. Having been blessed to be born in Las Vegas has given me the opportunity to see this wonderful city grow; an opportunity I owe to my parents who came to this city from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. My parents came to Las Vegas looking for the American dream and to provide a better opportunity for their children while still teaching us the tradition and culture of Mexico. This is where the magnificent story I have to tell you about begins. Anyone that knows Martha Luevanos sees the energetic firecracker that is loving and nurturing to all those around her. I, as her son, know the quiet and shy woman that always wants to be behind the curtain so as to not draw attention. As a child she was always shy. It wasn't until she began to dance did her true energy come out. Martha began her professional dancing career in 1962 in the Ballet Folklorico Mexicano de Ciudad Juarez, which was a professional dance company funded by the city of Juarez to perform the culture of Mexico to tourists. As a professional dancer for six years, she traveled and had the opportunity to perform the beauty and wonder that the folkloric dances represent. Once she was married and began a family, both of my parents decided to come to the United States for better opportunities. In the 70's, the Latin community was not big in Las Vegas which allowed those that lived in Las Vegas to form a social group in order to network and connect.



*Jalisco performance at East Las Vegas Community Center*



*Chiapas performance.*





# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## Mexican Culture in Las Vegas (cont.)

Martha, who has always had a fascination with the arts and a natural ability to teach, began showing the children of the social group the folkloric songs and dances as a way to pass on the Mexican traditions. She has been recognized as the first instructor to teach Mexican folklorico in Las Vegas.

Martha has had over 8,000 students in the 44 years she has been the instructor and choreographer of the Ballet Folklorico de Martha Luevanos. She strives to educate her students on the traditions of Mexico as well as the meanings and significance of each song. Many of the outfits are made by the hands of Martha and the students which adds to the organic feel of the dance company. The group is a resource for many students to gain confidence and the knowledge to further their educational experience. She has worked with the City of Las Vegas, Clark County, North Las Vegas, CCSD and many other organizations to promote the culture of Mexico. She currently teaches classes at the Winchester Dondero Cultural Center.

I know, you may be thinking why I am writing about my mother. Aside from her being the most amazing person in the world, if it wasn't for the passion and structure my mother instilled in me, and for the dance company, I would not be where I am today. She planted the seed in me to always help the community, which has ultimately led to my journey to work in recreation. She has also taught me lessons, which to this day, I use in my professional career and personal life. If you have not had the opportunity to meet Martha or see the company perform, I suggest you do as their performances are fun, educational and entertaining.



Martha Luevanos receiving a Congressional Recognition for supporting the City of Las Vegas Dia de Los Muertos Festival in 2019.



Martha Luevanos receiving an award from the Mexican Consulate, Committee of Art and Culture and the Institute of Mexico in the Exterior for the promotion of art and culture of Mexico in Nevada in 2017. The award was accompanied with a plaque of Kinich-Ahua, the patron Goddess of music and poetry.





# NRPS NEWSLETTER



## “¿Mijo, ¿qué dice esta carta?”

Walking through the center, I overhear a parent asking their child, “¿Mijo, ¿qué dice esta carta?” (“Son, what does this letter say?”). The child, an 8-year-old attending our after-school program, replies to his mom that he didn’t know. Seeing the mom’s frustration and feeling the anxiety the child had, either because he genuinely did not know or was not able to translate it to his mom, I assisted with reading the note from a teacher. The note asked the mom to have her child work on math at home. While informing mom that we can assist with homework through our after-school program, an idea came to mind. Not to be dramatic but I literally felt like a bulb lit over my head. We needed something that would service the community and show the students the many educational opportunities available to them.

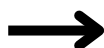
Stupak Community Center is nestled right behind the Strat, the area is known as Naked City. The community sees its fair share of crime, drugs and homelessness. On the flip side, we have mothers and fathers looking out for each other’s children, making sure their kids get home safely and are where they are supposed to be; all while trying to make ends meet. Oftentimes these parents are each other’s support system and elect to be each other’s emergency contacts. I have witnessed several times parents trying to assist other kids with difficult math assignments. I say difficult because not only is English not these kids first language, there is also the “common core standards” which CCSD employs can also be somewhat confusing. What we see here is a tight-knit community full of potential. To help foster and nurture that potential, Stupak partnered with UNLV’s Future Latinos in Medicine Club to tutor its participants.

The partnership came about in 2016 when Alfredo, a young medical student, volunteered as a coach for a youth soccer team at East Las Vegas Community Center. He introduced himself to Recreation Leader, Ms. Franklin, and with the magic of a simple conversation, one thing led to the next and sparked the partnership with UNLV’s Future Latinos in Medicine Club. This partnership has allowed them to provide free tutoring to low income and at risk youth.

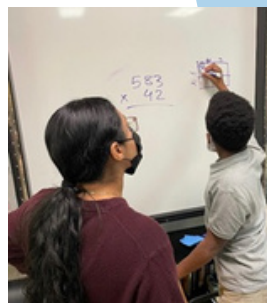
While most of us were burnt out with virtual learning during the pandemic, this group played a vital part in transitioning students from virtual to in-person learning. In conjunction with our staff they have been able to assist parents with school registration, magnet school applications, financial aid forms, transportation applications, and most importantly being mentors and role models to students, helping them to not fall behind, even during the most trying times of them have ever seen in education. Even when the kids are burnt out from school and insist they have nothing else to work on for school, we can spot them engaging with the volunteers, playing math, and reading games. We have been fortunate enough to watch this program grow from east Las Vegas to Stupak Community Center, in hopes that it will continue to grow in communities in need.



UNLV's Pre Med Dental society joining the fun



Math fun in the works.





# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## Let's GLOW!! Celebrating National Bike Month

City of Henderson's Outdoor Recreation department is bringing FUN to the trails in May for National Bike Month. When COVID hit the numbers of cyclists on City of Henderson trail significantly increased. With the increase, the Outdoor Recreation team noticed that the communities need to learn proper trail, and street riding etiquette. This community idea turned into fun yet educational experience for our cyclists. We hosted the first annual "Glow Bike Ride" for ages is 5+ . There were over 50 participants in attendance.

What to expect when you register for the Glow Bike Ride...

Participants can expect a light up, family-friendly night ride around Cornerstone Park in Henderson, NV. Everyone registered is required to bring a bike and wear a helmet. Neon bike decorations and glow bracelets are provided for all participants at check in. While participants are decorating their bikes, they are entertained by watching a BMX trick show orchestrated local retired professional rider, Matthew Olson and his team. During the trick show, the riders stress the importance of bike safety and wearing the proper safety gear. At the conclusion of the show all participants have their helmets checked. If helmet do not fit properly, the city provides them with a fitted helmet.

Before the glowing night ride begins, all cyclists take a ride through our .25-mile bicycle safety course. The course includes proper use of hand signals and having them demonstrate following basic rules of the road. When participants hit the trail, the one-mile loop is covered in glow in the dark decorations. There are two rest stops along the way providing water, snacks, and fun music! Participants have 45 minutes to get as many laps as they want. Matthew Olson and his crew even join the ride and cheer the participants on. It truly is a fun and educational night to conclude National Bike Month.





# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## Get ready - it's coming...

As the world starts to open again, spring is on its way in full force and the temperatures are gradually increasing, the sign of warmer weather and summer sun is just around the corner.

Families are anticipating vacations, camping under the stars, sitting around campfires, basking by the pool and taking a quick trip to the beach to unwind. For recreation professionals, it means that the busy season is upon us. Calendars are filled with meetings, trainings and hiring events. Pools are getting booked with complete teams, high school swim and summer party reservations. Sport leagues are in full swing and recreation centers are adjusting classes to make space for the upcoming arrival of participants. Yes it's time to get ready for summer camp!

Camp days can be long and tiring depending on the type of program you are running. Do the majority of your planning before the first day of camp. For those that oversee camp regularly, you may already have a binder for camp - that big three ring notebook filled with daily schedules, games, activities and craft projects for those who don't it's time to make one so you're ready to go!

Use these tips to prepare yourself and be ready so you too will get to enjoy some lazy days by the pool.

- First write your goals of what kind of experiences you want your campers to have
- Take a deep breath and pull out your notes, budgets, books and login to your Pinterest account
- Start with a plan - what would a day/ week of a camper look like and write it down
- Create a schedules with activities, music, games, crafts and lots of fun
- Book your field trips and buses
- Reach out to community partners and schedule them to speak at your camp
- Train all your staff and share your vision and goals

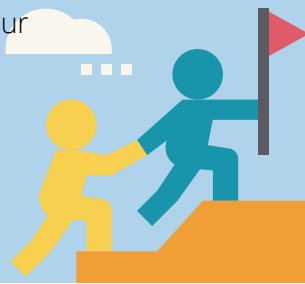
Ensure you have all your supplies. Inspect your equipment to confirm it is in good shape and replace what is unusable. Research if there is any new equipment you would like to try. Order promptly as we all know supply chains are slow.

Examine and resupply the first aid kits with the required amount of band-aids, icepacks, sunscreen and additional items. Place a supply list in first aid kit and regularly check contents. Make copies of incident reports and a sample of how they need to be completed.

It is highly recommended to create pocket notes for your counselors. (Pocket notes are laminated cards that are on a keyring, which includes songs, chants, attention getters, quick games that can be played when they are stuck in traffic or have extra time and easily fit in a backpack).

Lastly take a walk and find your patience, compassion and positive energy. Remember summer camp is a rewarding experience and what other job is there that you get paid to play!

"Preparation is the key to leadership success. The more prepared you are the less your struggle..." Israelmore Ayivor







# NRPS NEWSLETTER

## The Adaptability and Resilience of Parks and Recreation:

### City of Henderson Parks and Recreation Covid-19 Efforts

The City of Henderson's mission is to provide services and resources that enhance the quality of life for those who live, learn, work, and play in our city. This is done by being DRIVEN with INTEGRITY through COLLABORATION to achieve EXCELLENCE. The City of Henderson looks for continuous improvement and this helps us handle the changes that are happening around us. This article provides insight into Covid-19 efforts and successes that the City of Henderson Parks and Recreation Department implemented to better service our community during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Parks and Recreation department developed and implemented a safe and effective Covid-19 drive-thru testing model on September 7, 2021. This model was first piloted to volunteered City of Henderson employees to receive feedback on the process and then officially launched to the public. Since September 7th the Parks and Recreation department has administered 465 Covid-19 tests to City of Henderson employees, family members, and registered participants. By providing free Covid-19 testing, the department was able to promote health and safety, allow children to get back into school and parks and recreation programming, which allowed parents to return to work faster, and provided the community with an infrastructure to rely on during large Covid-19 spikes— December 2021 – January 2022 —when Henderson residents could not find same day Covid-19 testing.

In addition to Covid-19 testing, the Parks and Recreation Department offered contact tracing for those who recreate within our facilities. The department has been quarantining and contact tracing since March 13, 2021 and continue to offer this service. Since March the department has quarantined 527 registered City of Henderson participants. The department followed the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Southern Nevada Health District's Covid-19 guidance.

NRPA has developed five statements that support how and why Parks and Recreation is essential. The five statements can be found here on their website. The City of Henderson has embodied those statements throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. By being resilient and adaptable, Parks and Recreation departments, like the City of Henderson, have illustrated that Parks and Recreation is an essential part of the community.





# NRPS NEWSLETTER

Save  
THE  
Date



NRPS Conference is February 28th- March 1st  
2023 at Sunset station in Henderson Nevada

LEAD will be March 2nd

