



# News Release

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## **Shawnee County Parks + Recreation recognized with two awards at Kansa Recreation and Park Association Conference in Wichita**

### ***Terry Bertels honored with KRPA Distinguished Professional award***

TOPEKA, KAN. – Terry Bertels, recently retired deputy director of Shawnee County Parks + Recreation, has been recognized with the Kansas Recreation and Park Association Distinguished Professional Award. The award was presented Jan. 25 during KRPA's Annual Conference in Wichita.

In his 33-year career, Terry Bertels' hand touched much of what stands today as Shawnee County Parks + Recreation. As former City of Topeka Parks Director, he expanded hiking/biking trails, built a state of the art greenhouse in Gage Park, an art wall in Aaron Douglas Art Park, added a building to Old Prairie Town/Ward-Meade Historic Site, renovated numerous playgrounds, hosted national sports tournaments, oversaw special events including the Senior Olympics and Sunflower Games, and added ADA improvements to parks. As deputy director of SCP+R, he managed the development and construction of the \$9.2 million Midwest Health Aquatic Center and \$1.25 million in renovations of Dornwood Park -- completely rebuilding two baseball/softball fields and adding a spray park to serve an underserved area of the community. The water slides at the aquatic center rank in the top 10-15 percent of municipal water slides. Bertels retired at the end of 2017.

"Terry is not an attention seeker, but his integrity and his quiet, calm, competent leadership style have earned him the respect of all who deal with him," said John E. Knight, director, SCP+R, adding that Bertels displayed a commitment to professionalism and an unwavering desire to serve his peers, co-workers and patrons of Shawnee County Parks + Recreation.

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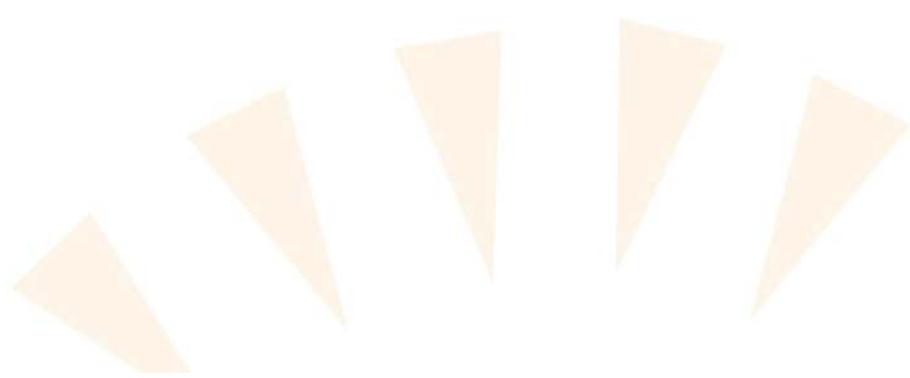
### **Outdoor Kansas Kids Day receives 2017 Event of the Year Award from Kansas Wildscapes**

TOPEKA, KAN. – Shawnee County Parks + Recreation's Outdoor Kansas for Kids Day has received one of two 2017 Event of the Year Awards from Kansas Wildscapes. The award was presented at the conclusion of the Kansas Recreation and Park Association Conference in Wichita.

Outdoor Kansas For Kids day, held annually at Shawnee North Community Park, is designed to

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Introduce today's youth to the outdoors and interest them in continued outdoor recreation activities. SCP+R's Outdoor Kansas for Kids Day included such activities as stream testing, tree knowledge, skins & skulls (animal pelts), animal track casting, nature painting, archery, reel casting, a hiking quiz, a campsite and s'mores and games such as a water balloon launch, water gun shoot and yard games.

A total of 112 youth and 145 of their family members attended the event. Outdoor Kansas Kids Day aligns with research in SCP+R's Master Plan indicating a desire for more outdoor activities and it aligns with a Community Health study showing the need for youth to be more physically active to help combat obesity.

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Shawnee County Parks + Recreation includes more than 50 miles of trails, 2,625 acres of parks and 320 annual days of sporting activities. In addition, the department offers recreation programs, educational programs and golf. A combination of tax dollars, user fees and private donations enables Shawnee County Parks and Recreation to offer parks, sporting and aquatic facilities with state-of-the-art features, and beautiful, nationally recognized gardens.

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