

RON COLEMAN

City of Ellisville, Director of Parks & Recreation. Ozark Greenways, Executive Director. City of Chesterfield, Director of Parks & Recreation. Open Space Council, Executive Director. While “Director” appears to be the common theme of all these positions, it is only one common factor. Affectionately referred to as “the start up guy,” Ron was the first in each of these positions. He became very efficient in the standard policy and procedures required for a smooth operation while creating recreational programs to get a new department moving. While Ron has moved on from all of these professional positions, these agencies remain active and viable today.

Combining his experience and understanding of the needs for local and non-profit and government organizations alike, Ron established his own company, The Coleman Group. The organization and talents of The Coleman Group, Ron assembled a team of professionals from a variety of fields who could act to service and fulfill recreation services or management needs for a variety of agencies. Ron has chaired many initiatives throughout the state of Missouri for the benefit of parks, conservation, trails, clean water and public art and for the betterment of all Missourians and our states natural resources. Many of the programs Ron initiated or nurtured continue to flourish.

A tight proofreader, Ron assisted in the creation of many special publications for a variety of local and statewide initiatives. While Ron may not have shot the video or snapped the photos, his eye to detail and crisp production was essential to the success of many projects he initiated or worked with. Two keystone video projects, Rivers in Renaissance and Greenways for Missouri, helped to educate and promote the ideals of river stewardship and open space protection.

Through both his action and advocacy he has helped to conserve thousands of acres of open space in the form of conservation and park land, acquire and develop miles of hiking and biking trails and helped to restore the natural beauty to the lower Meramec River located on the eastern edge of the Ozarks Plateau. He has inspired thousands of individuals, companies, and corporations to volunteer their time and resources for river stewardship projects such as Operation Clean Stream, the Missouri Stream Team, and the Meramec River Tributary Alliance. Although he never takes full credit, his leadership has resulted in raising millions of dollars for land and water conservation endeavors in our state.

Ron has always advocated, “Service to mankind is the best work in life.” In recent years his volunteer service to numerous organizations has influenced state and national funding and policy which has benefited millions of Americans and Missouri citizens. In addition to volunteer service across numerous organizations, Ron was elected as the President of the Missouri Park Association, Conservation Federation of Missouri, and Missouri Park and Recreation Association, a leadership trifecta!

Ron’s professional and volunteer work with land and water conservation has earned him local, state and national recognition including Missouri Water Conservationist of the Year, MPRA Fellow, Conservationist of the Year by the St. Louis Audubon Society, Missouri Conservationist of the Year Conservation Federation of Missouri, and Watershed Management Award presented by the Missouri Water Environment Association.

In 2010 Ron was honored by Governor Jay Nixon and the Missouri Legislature with the prestigious Missourian Award for his conservation, parks, outdoor recreation, and public service to the state of Missouri and the nation.

Ron has been a master at recognizing seemingly diverse or unrelated interests and pulling parties together to accomplish a greater good for all. Playing the role of a mentor was not an act with Ron, it was a personality trait which came naturally to him. The careers of many park professionals in Missouri have been positively impacted directly and indirectly by Ron.

Congratulations to the 2020 inductee into the Missouri Recreation and Parks Hall of Fame, Ron Coleman