

Dan Kinney-2010

Wichita State University marked the beginning of Dan Kinney's formal education, where he received his undergraduate degree. His professional career began in 1967 as a General Supervisor of the Wichita, Kansas, Park Board then he moved to Columbia, Missouri, three years later to pursue his Masters Degree in Recreation and Park Administration at the University while working as Recreation Supervisor for Columbia Parks and Recreation. He became the Assistant Director of the Springfield Park Board, in 1971 and six years later he was named Director for Springfield following retirement of the first and only previous Director Jim Ewing. During 29 years there, Dan moved Springfield from good to great, leading them through a period of substantial in both budget and facilities prior to his 2006 retirement. In 1996, Dan managed with Springfield and Green County voters approval, to expand the city department into the only combined city/county agency in the state of Missouri at the time. He was also instrumental in the passage of Springfield's first Parks Sales Tax initiative in 2001 which continues to provide for improvements to existing park facilities and expand Springfield park system. Through the years Dan served on and chaired numerous committees for the Missouri Park and Recreation Association and served as Vice-president and then President in 1975-76. Dan remained active behind the scenes regarding MPRA legislative issues, garnering support which eventually led to passage of the combined city/county agency legislation and the local option parks sales tax. For over 20 years he served as State Commissioner for the Missouri Amateur Softball Association where he built relationships critical to the growth of Missouri Park and Recreation Association. Dan served on the National Recreation and Park Association's Great Lakes Regional Council, Open Space Standards Committee and was a member of the American Park and Recreation Society. As testament to his leadership, during his years as Springfield's Director, the Department received the National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management in 2000. Springfield also received the Sports Town USA Award from NPRA and Sports Illustrated Magazine in 2003. Dan has been personally recognized by induction into Springfield Area Sports Hall of Fame in 2002 and the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame in 2005. He received the University of Missouri-Columbia Eyes of the Tiger Lifetime Achievement Award, the MPRA Fellow Award in 1981, and the Retirement Service Award in 2006. Even after retirement Dan has continued to be recognized for his efforts, receiving the National Recreation and Park Association's R.O.S.E. Award in 2008. Dan's impact on the Missouri Park and Recreation Association has perhaps been best stated by former MPRA Executive Director Dave Ostland who said "In my early years as Executive Director there were four individuals whose support was crucial to the very existence of MPRA. Dan Kinney was one of the four." Current Springfield-Greene County Park Board Director Jodie Adams stated "One of the highest forms of community recognition a person can receive is to have the citizens you have served for so many years name a park or facility after you in perpetuity." The reality of this recognition is that construction has begun on the Dan Kinney Park in Springfield, Missouri.