

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

“It is the mission of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association to provide opportunities that enhance the professional well-being of its members and to be an advocate for the lifetime benefits of parks, recreation and conservation.” 1996

“It is the mission of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association to be an advocate in providing quality park, recreation and conservation education, resources and services to professionals and citizens throughout the State of Illinois. 2009

The Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) is a professional membership association whose members are interested in providing quality community park, recreation and conservation services to the residents of Illinois. IPRA represents over 2500 park, recreation and conservation professionals throughout Illinois.

It is governed by an eighteen member Board of Directors. IPRA also has sections, committees and an occasional task force which focus on specific areas within the park and recreation field. The Board hires a Chief Executive Officer who is responsible for the overall operation of the association.

The past and current challenging economy combined with some internal difficulties caused the IPRA Officers and Board to decide an objective review of IPRA was needed. As a result, the Board appointed a task force to review, study and make recommendations concerning the IPRA’s structure, organization and services. Members of the Task Force are Rich Grodsky, chair, Jan Buchs, Bill Clevenger, John Curran, and Carrie Hauptert.

It was also decided that it would be helpful to conduct a membership survey. One had not been conducted since 1996. Chair Ron Salski contacted the Office of Recreation and Park Resources (ORPR) to determine if they could assist with the project. ORPR agreed to do so. A meeting was then scheduled and held on May 11, 2009 in Kankakee, Illinois to discuss the project.

In attendance at that meeting were Ron Salski, IPRA Chair, Carrie Hauptert, Chair-Elect, LoriKay Paden, Secretary of IPRA and staff member of ORPR, Mike Selep, Interim CEO of IPRA, and Robin Hall, Director of ORPR. A general agreement as to process, information desired and a timetable were determined. IPRA wanted a report from the committee by its July 22 meeting. It was also decided that ORPR would work with the IPRA Membership Survey sub-committee of the Professional Service Committee.

The Membership Survey Sub-Committee was chaired by Kim Smith. Fred Gusel, Chair, and Rick Poole, Co-Chair of the Professional Services Committee were members as were Andy Dunfee, Gail Ito, John Robinson, and Kathy Spandikow. LoriKay Paden served as Board representative and Mike Selep was the staff representative. Robin Hall was the ORPR staff person in charge of the project.

A sub-committee meeting was held in Bolingbrook on Tuesday, May 19. At that meeting, purpose, goals, process, content and timetable were discussed. It was agreed that Hall would develop a rough draft of the survey instrument and that the rest of the committee's review and input would be by email. It was also agreed the membership survey would be conducted on-line.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the survey is to give all IPRA members an opportunity to provide input into the present and future direction of their association. The information collected will assist the Board and staff in decisions regarding structure and the allocation of limited resources.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To determine what services are used by members.
- 2) To determine which services are rated most important by members.
- 3) To identify the most important reasons practitioners join IPRA.
- 4) To determine the participation in and importance of the sections.
- 5) To determine overall participation in and satisfaction with IPRA.
- 6) To solicit general input and suggestions for improving IPRA.
- 7) To determine professional background experience.
- 8) To obtain some membership demographic and background information.

SURVEY PROCEDURES AND RESPONSE RATE

During the last two weeks of May and the first two weeks of June, the Membership Survey Committee working with the ORPR staff developed a survey instrument. The survey was comprised of five sections.

Section I. – IPRA Membership/Services/Involvement

– 12 questions, 6 allowed open-ended response

Section II. – Professional Background Experience

– 4 questions, 2 allowed open-ended responses

Section III. – Employment/Position

– 3 questions, 2 allowed open-ended responses

Section IV. – Respondent Profile

– 7 questions

Section V. – General Comments

– Open-ended

The committee wanted to develop a survey instrument that would allow the members to adequately respond, provide useful information for the Board and staff, and one that was not burdensome in length. The survey was completed and went through two pre-tests with the survey committee.

Between June 16th and the 19th all IPRA members were contacted by e-mail announcing the survey was forthcoming and encouraging their participation. On June 22nd, the Office of Recreation and Park Resources distributed an online survey to IPRA's 2574 members. Reminders to complete the survey were sent on June 30, July 1 and July 6.

Overall, 927 members completed the full survey. This represented a response rate of 36 percent. This return gives us a 95 percent confidence level that our responses will be in a +/- 3% of the estimate.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Most Used and Most Important Services

1. Used

1. Annual Conference	80.5%
2. Magazine	63.3%
3. Education Workshops/Seminars	60.03%
4. Job Announcements	59.4%
5. Membership Directory	58.7%
6. Website	53.6%

2. Important (ranked in order of most important)

1. Annual Conference	85%
2. Job Announcements	57%
3. Membership Directory	45%
4. Education Workshops/Seminars	68%
5. Magazine	44%
6. Website and Networking Opportunities	48%

3. Reasons People Are Members (Very Important Ranking)

1. Developing personal contacts, meeting others in the field	76%
2. Education workshops/seminars	65%
3. Show support for the profession	53%
4. Building a reputation and credentials in your field	57%
5. Keeping informed through IPRA publications – magazine, website	53%

4. Section Services (ranked in order of most important)

Workshops, seminars	68%
Opportunity to network	63%
Resource information	51%
Opportunities for involvement	46%

5. Improvement Needed in Section Activities and Services (Combining Lots and Some)

1. Workshops, seminars	58%
2. Resource information	52%
3. Opportunity for involvement	48%
4. Information regarding section activities	46%
5. Opportunity to network	43%
6. Meeting notices and mailings	42%
7. Newsletters	38%
8. Awards/recognition programs	30%

6. 72.9 % of members participate in Section activities once or twice a year or never.

7. Served on an IPRA Committee, Board, Section Board, etc. within the Last 3 Years

	<u>2009</u>	<u>1996</u>
No	68.7%	55%
Yes	31.3%	43%
No Answer	1.5%	2%

8. Reasons for Not Serving

Time	68.7%
Never been asked	31.3%

The top two reasons are the same as in 1996.

9. How can IPRA improve existing benefits and services to better suit your needs?

See Appendix E (page 41) for details.

10. What new benefits, services, etc. should IPRA develop to make your membership more valuable?

See Appendix F (page 64) for details.

11. Overall Levels of Satisfaction with IPRA in Meeting Your Professional Needs

	<u>2009</u>	<u>1996</u>
Very Satisfied	9.9%	20.0%
Satisfied	60.7%	60.0%
Neutral/No Opinion	20.7%	12.0%
Dissatisfied	7.3%	5.0%
Very Dissatisfied	1.4%	1.0%

12. If your employer currently pays your dues, would you renew your membership if they would not pay your dues next year (\$254.00)?

	<u>2009</u>	<u>1996</u>
Yes	23.6%	54.0%
No	41.0%	14.0%
Don't Know	35.4%	22.0%

DETAILED SURVEY FINDINGS

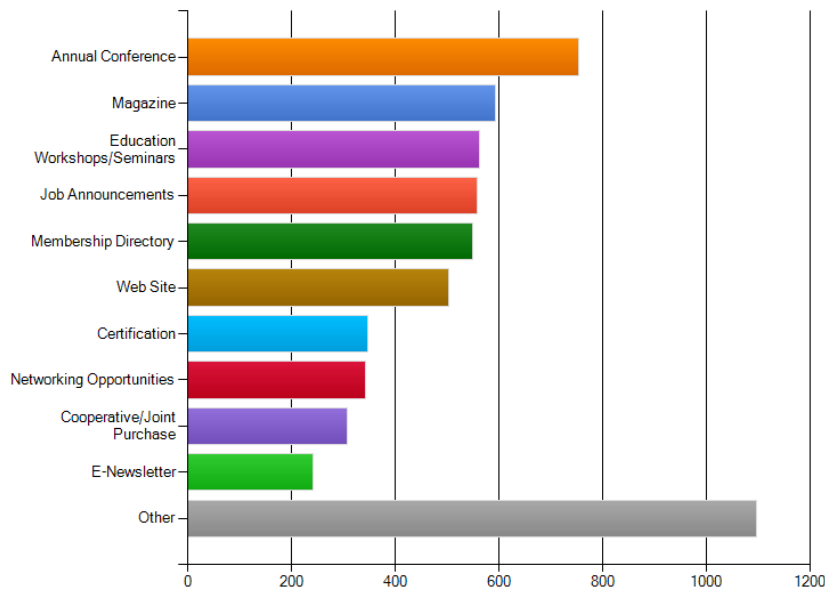
I. IPRA Membership/Services/Involvement

Question 1: Which IPRA services have you used in the last two years?

Responses listed from most to least used:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Annual Conference	80.5%	754
Magazine	63.3%	593
Education Workshops/Seminars	60.0%	562
Job Announcements	59.4%	557
Membership Directory	58.7%	550
Web Site	53.6%	502
Certification	36.9%	346
Networking Opportunities	36.6%	343
Cooperative/Joint Purchase	32.9%	308
E-Newsletter	25.8%	242
Salary Survey	20.0%	187
Professional Recognition Awards	15.5%	145
Advocacy/Legislation/Lobbying	13.4%	126
Resources: Manuals, Tools, Resource Library	13.1%	123
Ticket Programs	13.0%	122
Volunteer/Leadership Opportunities	12.9%	121
Blog	11.2%	105
Agency Accreditation	9.1%	85
Webinars	4.5%	42
Mentor Program	4.4%	41
<i>answered question</i>		937

Which IPRA services have you used in the last two years? (listed alphabetically)



Question 2: Please rank the top six most important services offered to you by IPRA by indicating your choices (1-6), 1 being most important to you.

Responses listed as most important to least important:

Answer Options	Response Total	Response Count
Annual Conference	1,865	800
Education Workshops/Seminars	1,737	632
Certification	1,091	347
Job Announcements	1,768	537
Membership Directory	1,744	420
Magazine	1,699	410
Web Site	1,599	413
Networking Opportunities	1,595	473
Cooperative/Joint Purchase	938	241
Resources: Manuals, Tools, Resource Library	932	232
Advocacy/Legislation/Lobbying	742	261
E-Newsletter	509	123
Ticket Programs	369	88
Salary Survey	731	171
Volunteer/Leadership Opportunities	562	127
Agency Accreditation	358	90
Professional Recognition Awards	342	75
Webinars	201	51
Blog	147	33
Mentor Program	144	34
<i>answered question</i>		931
<i>skipped question</i>		20

Question 3: How important are each of the following reasons in your decision to join IPRA?

Answer Options	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Response Count
1. Building a reputation and credentials in your field	86 (9%)	312 (33%)	534 (57%)	932
2. Developing professional contact; meeting others in your field	21 (2%)	203 (21%)	713 (76%)	937
3. Show support of the profession	52 (5%)	342 (41%)	539 (53%)	933
4. Keeping informed through the association publications: IPR magazine, web site, etc.	46 (4%)	389 (41%)	495 (53%)	930
5. Learning about new career possibilities	156 (16%)	389 (41%)	390 (41%)	935
6. Having a forum for your ideas. Being able to express yourself before your peers	268 (28%)	504 (54%)	159 (17%)	931
7. Continuing your education through workshops and seminars	41 (4%)	281 (30%)	612 (65%)	934
8. Employer requires membership in IPRA	394 (43%)	293 (31%)	229 (25%)	916
9. Annual state conference reduced rate	162 (17%)	390 (42%)	376 (40%)	928
10. Recommended by school/university	540 (60%)	257 (28%)	100 (11%)	897
11. Employers pays the dues	174 (18%)	298 (32%)	445 (48%)	917
12. Other	83 (70%)	15 (12%)	20 (16%)	118
Please specify. (See below)				17
<i>answered question</i>				939
<i>skipped question</i>				12

Other as Specified:

See Appendix C (page 34) for open ended comments and responses.

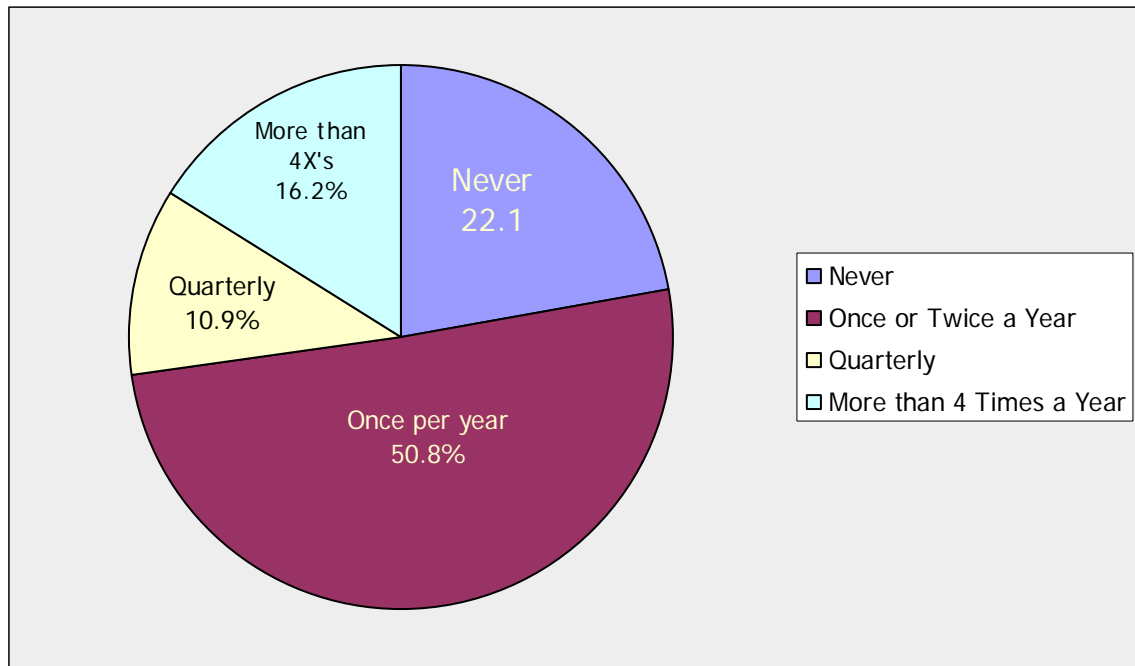
Question 4: How IMPORTANT is it that your primary section supports/offers these types of activities or services?

Answer Options	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Response Count
1. Workshops, Seminars	42	256	629	927
2. Opportunity for involvement	71	422	428	921
3. Resource Information (surveys, etc.)	47	397	477	921
4. Opportunity to network	44	291	585	920
5. Awards/recognition programs	298	462	160	920
6. Newsletters	136	540	244	920
7. Information regarding section activities	112	517	291	920
8. Meeting notices and mailings	131	519	268	918
<i>answered question</i>				927
<i>skipped question</i>				24

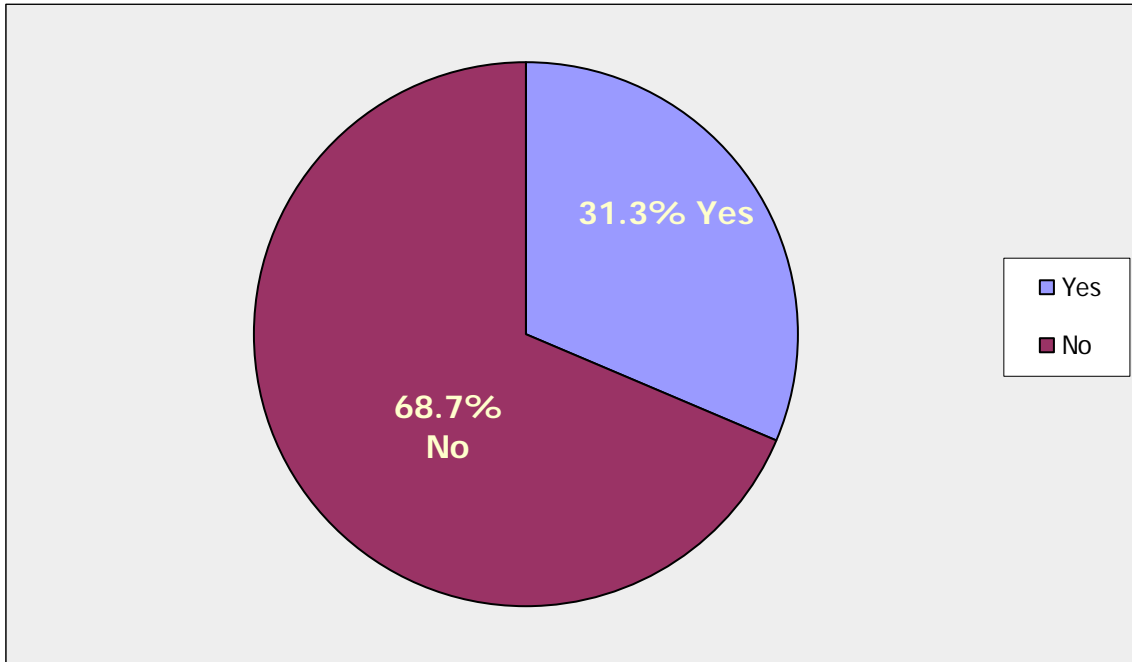
Question 5: How much IMPROVEMENT, if any, is needed in the activities and services supported/offered by your primary section?

Answer Options	Lots	Some	Little or None	Don't Know/No Opinion	Response Count
1. Workshops, Seminars	127	404	303	86	920
2. Opportunity for involvement	95	326	398	100	919
3. Resource Information (surveys, etc.)	117	363	329	110	919
4. Opportunity to network	81	316	423	101	921
5. Awards/recognition programs	55	222	459	180	916
6. Newsletters	75	276	443	123	917
7. Information regarding section activities	93	330	386	110	919
8. Meeting notices and mailings	81	302	423	105	911
Answered question					923
Skipped question					28

Question 6: How often do you participate in section activities?



Question 7: Have you served on an IPRA committee, Board, Section Board, etc., within the past three years? (Based on 936 replies)



Question 8: If no, why not? Check all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Travel Cost	18.7%	120
Time	66.6%	427
Do not agree with philosophies of the organization	2.5%	16
Do not desire to serve	16.2%	104
Never been asked	34.0%	218
Do not feel welcome/opinions not valued	7.0%	45
Do not feel I know enough about the organization to get involved	15.8%	101
Do not know how to become more active	13.9%	89
Tried but was not selected/contacted	4.7%	30
Employer policy prohibits participation	0.8%	5
No interest	10.0%	64
Other	12.8%	82
Please specify – See Below		110
<i>answered question</i>		641
<i>skipped question</i>		310

Other as Specified:

See Appendix D (page 35) for open ended comments and responses.

Question 9: How can IPRA improve existing benefits and services to better suit your needs?

295 Members responded to this question
See Appendix E (page 41) for all open ended comments and responses.

Question 10: What new benefits, services, etc. should IPRA develop to make your membership more valuable?

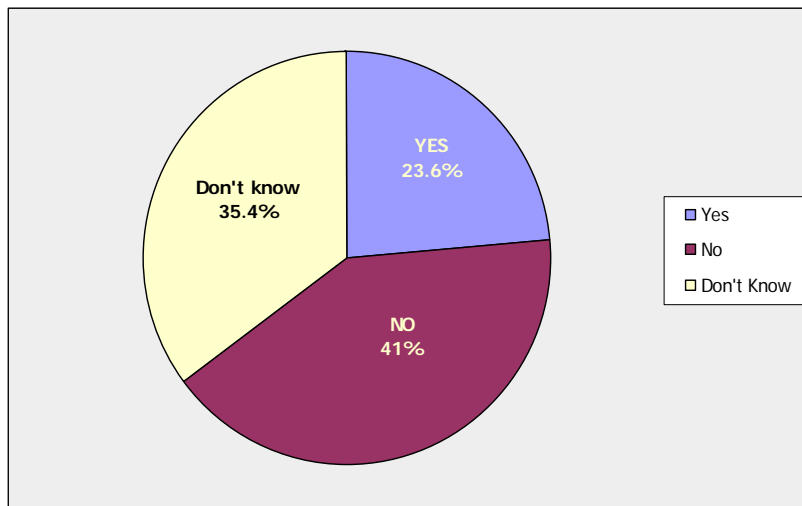
205 Members responded to this question.
See Appendix F (pages 64) for all open ended comments and responses.

Question 11: Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with IPRA in meeting your professional needs.

Answer Options	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Response Count
You feel:	13 (1%)	68 (7%)	192 (21%)	564 (61%)	92 (10%)	929
<i>answered question</i>						929
<i>skipped question</i>						22

Summary: 71% of the respondents are satisfied and very satisfied.
8% are dissatisfied and very dissatisfied.
21% have no or neutral opinion

Question 12: If your employer currently pays your dues, would you renew your membership if they would not pay your dues next year (\$254.00)?

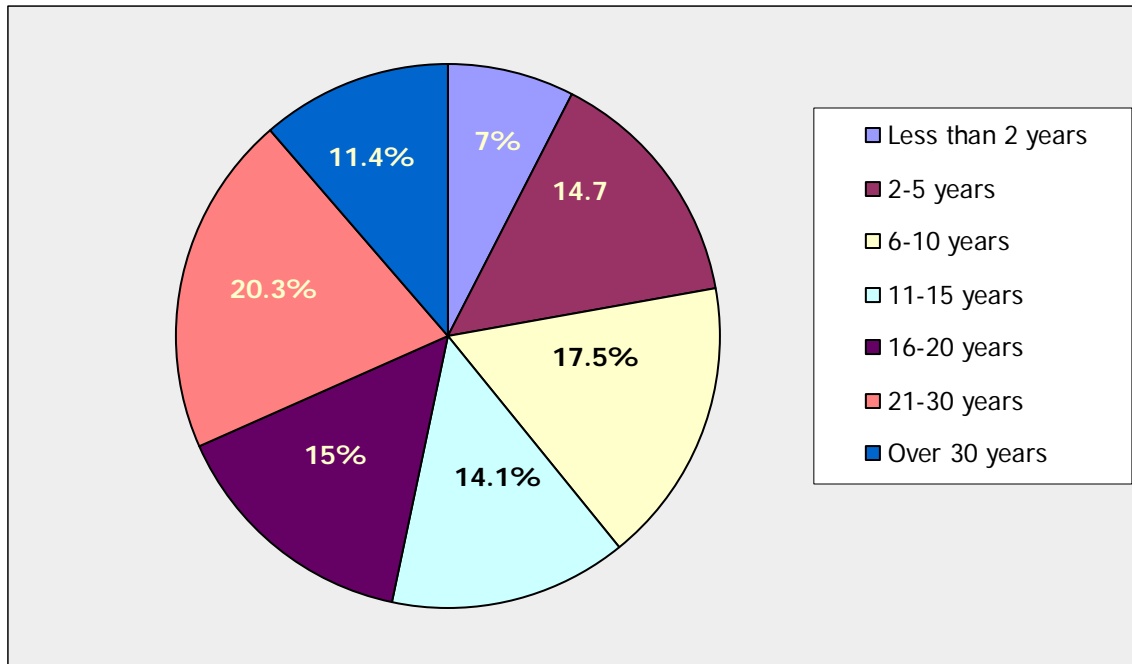


Why or Why Not?

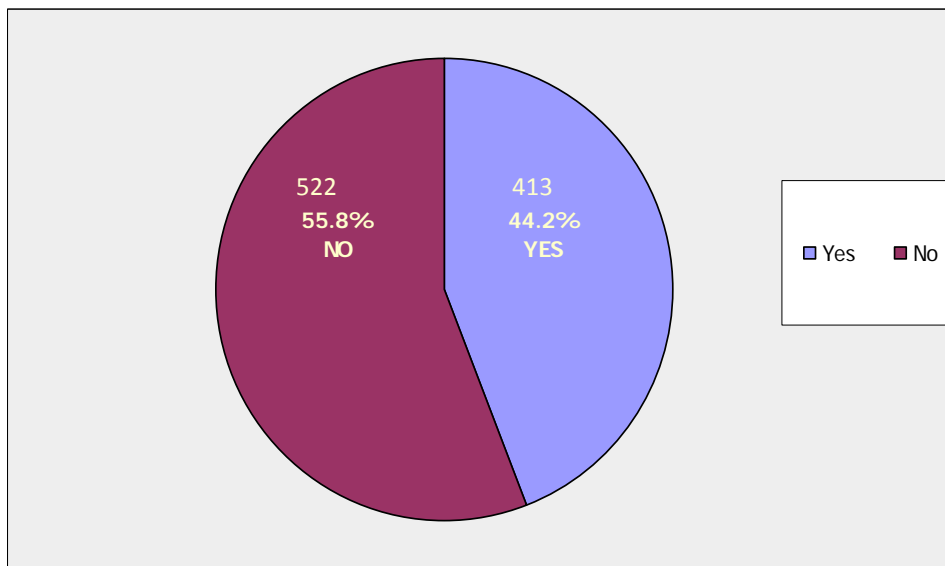
See Appendix G (page 76) for all open ended comments and responses.

II. Professional Background Experience

Question 1: What is the length of your full-time paid experience in the field?



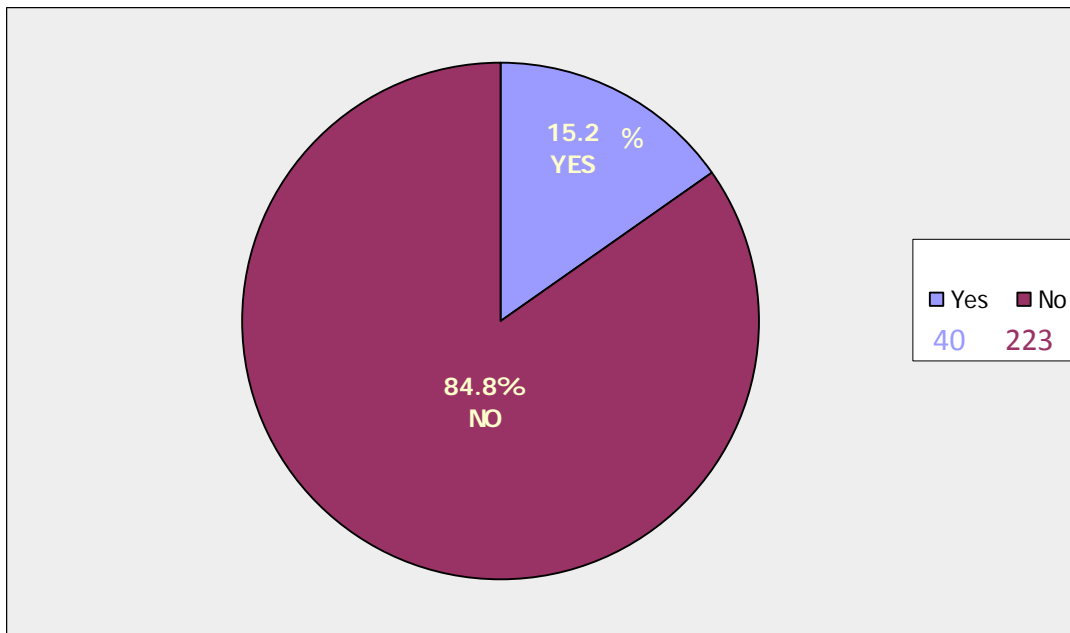
Question 2: Are you certified through the NRPA Professional Certification Program?



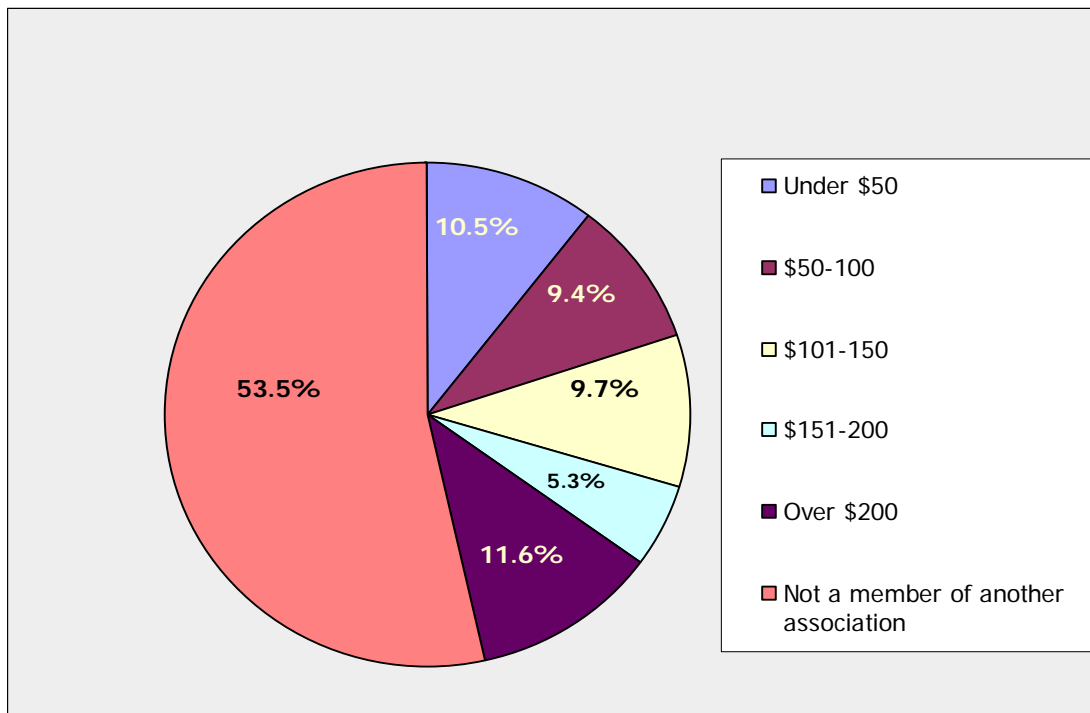
Why or Why Not?

See Appendix H (page 96) for all open ended comments and responses.

Question 3: If you are employed in a therapeutic recreation position, are you certified through the National Council of Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC)?



Question 4: If you are a member of another related professional association (other than an IPRA affiliate and NRPA), please indicate your annual dues for that association. If you belong to more than one, please indicate the one you value the most.



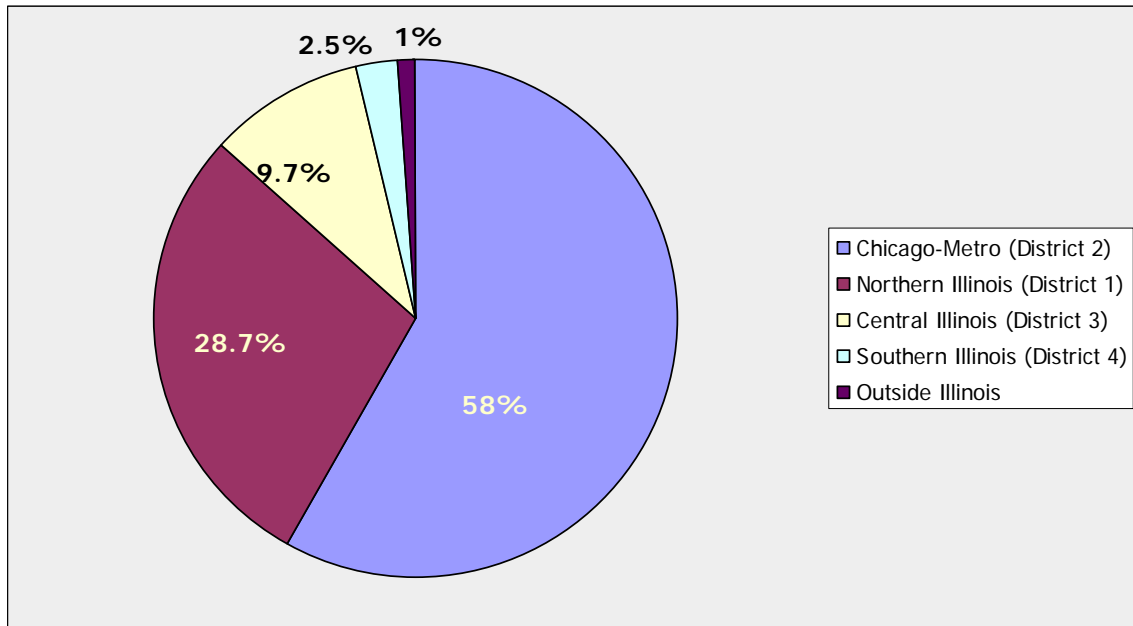
III. Employment/Position

Question 1: Which category best describes the agency for which you work?
(Please check only one.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Park District	69.4%	648
Municipal Parks/Recreation Department	11.0%	103
Special Recreation Agency	8.4%	78
Other (please specify)	3.7%	35
Forest Preserve/Conservation District	2.2%	21
Educational Institution	2.0%	19
Not Currently Employed	1.6%	15
Private/Commercial Recreation	1.0%	9
State/Federal Park & Recreation Agency	0.4%	4
Hospital/Rehabilitation Institute	0.2%	2
County Park/Recreation Agency	0.0%	0
Voluntary Youth Serving Agency	0.0%	0
Other	3.7%	35
<i>answered question</i>		934
<i>skipped question</i>		17

See Appendix J (page 112) for all open ended comments and responses.

Question 2: In what geographic location are you currently employed?
(Please check only one.)



Question 3: Which job title best describes your primary employment responsibilities? (Please check only one.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Director/Chief Executive Officer	16.0%	148
Assistant Director	2.7%	25
Superintendent of Recreation	12.2%	113
Superintendent of Parks	4.2%	39
Superintendent-Revenue Facilities	1.7%	16
Superintendent-Finance & Personnel	3.7%	34
Recreation Staff/Specialist/Leader/Supervisor	24.2%	224
Human Resources Manager	1.0%	9
Public Information/Marketing Manager	5.3%	49
Clinical Service Supervisor	0.1%	1
Therapist/Therapist Assistant	0.9%	8
Park Maintenance Supervisor/Staff	1.9%	18
Facility Supervisor	7.0%	65
Educator	2.2%	20
Other (please specify) – See Below	16.9%	156
<i>answered question</i>		925
<i>skipped question</i>		26

Other as Specified:

See Appendix K (page 113) for all open ended comments and responses.

IV. Respondent Profile

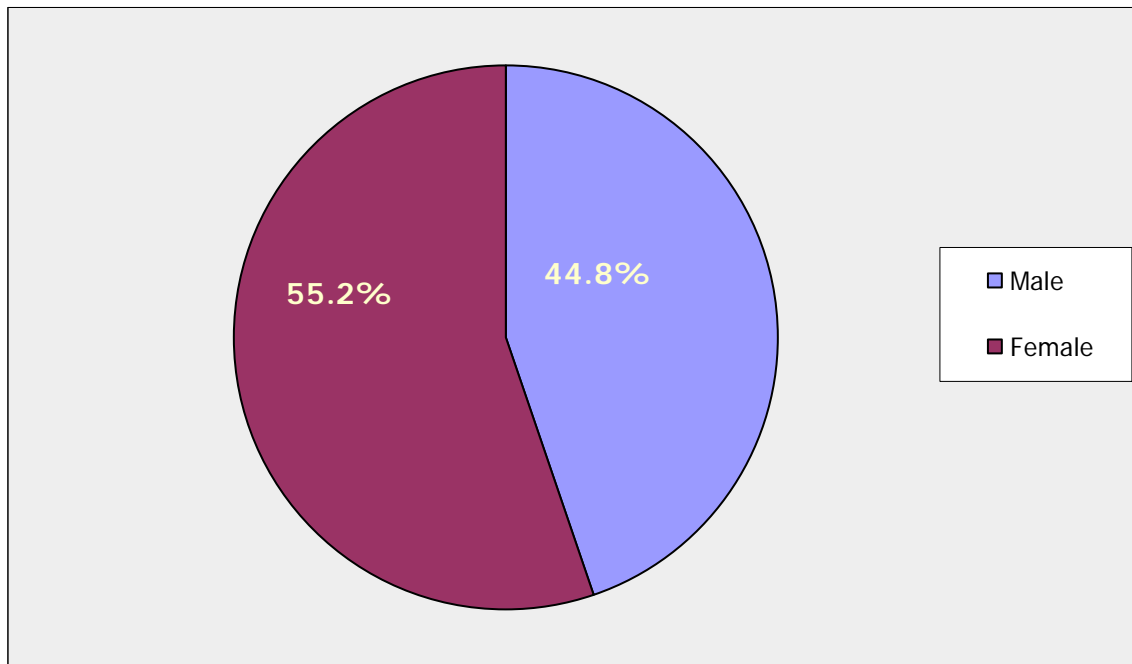
Question 1: How many years have you been a member of IPRA?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 2 years	10.6%	99
2-5 years	18.5%	173
6-10 years	19.3%	180
11-15 years	16.4%	153
16-20 years	12.9%	120
21-30 years	14.8%	138
Over 30 years	7.5%	70
<i>answered question</i>		933
<i>skipped question</i>		18

Question 2: What is your age?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 25	3.9%	36
25-29	10.8%	100
30-34	12.9%	120
35-39	12.4%	115
40-44	12.4%	115
45-49	14.0%	130
50-54	17.0%	158
55-59	11.7%	109
60-64	4.0%	37
65 and over	1.1%	10
<i>answered question</i>		930
<i>skipped question</i>		21

Question 3: What is your gender?



Question 4: What is your annual gross income (before taxes)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under \$25,000	3.2%	29
\$25,000-34,999	6.6%	59
\$35,000-44,999	20.0%	180
\$45,000-54,999	16.8%	151
\$55,000-64,999	13.3%	120
\$65,000-74,999	11.0%	99
\$75,000-84,999	7.4%	67
\$85,000-94,999	6.8%	61
\$95,000 and over	14.9%	134
<i>answered question</i>		900
<i>skipped question</i>		51

Question 5: In which IPRA section are you a member? (Please check your primary section(s) if you are a member of more than one section.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Recreation	34.2%	308
Administration and Finance	27.2%	245
Facility Management	18.0%	162
Parks and Natural Resource Management	12.5%	113
Therapeutic Recreation	9.7%	87
Communications and Marketing	7.1%	64
Ethnic Minority	0.7%	6
<i>answered question</i>		901
<i>skipped question</i>		50

Question 6: What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? (Please check only one.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
High school diploma	6.2%	57
Associate's degree	5.7%	52
Bachelor's degree	61.6%	566
Master's degree	24.9%	229
Doctorate	1.6%	15
<i>answered question</i>		919

Question 7: If you have received a bachelor's, masters and/or doctorate, please indicate the area of your highest degree.

Answer Options	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Response Count
Park and Recreation Administration or Leadership	352	99	4	429
Therapeutic Recreation	58	8	2	67
Physical Education	41	7	0	47
Public Administration	7	29	0	36
Conservation & Natural Resources	26	6	2	32
Finance/Business	52	32	0	80
Other	212	67	8	262
<i>answered question</i>				812
<i>skipped question</i>				139

V. Comments, Suggestions, Questions:

Question 1: Please use the space below to express additional thoughts, concerns or questions.

161 respondents made an additional comment. These comments are grouped in similar categories.

Please see the Appendix L (Page 117) for the full list of responses.