

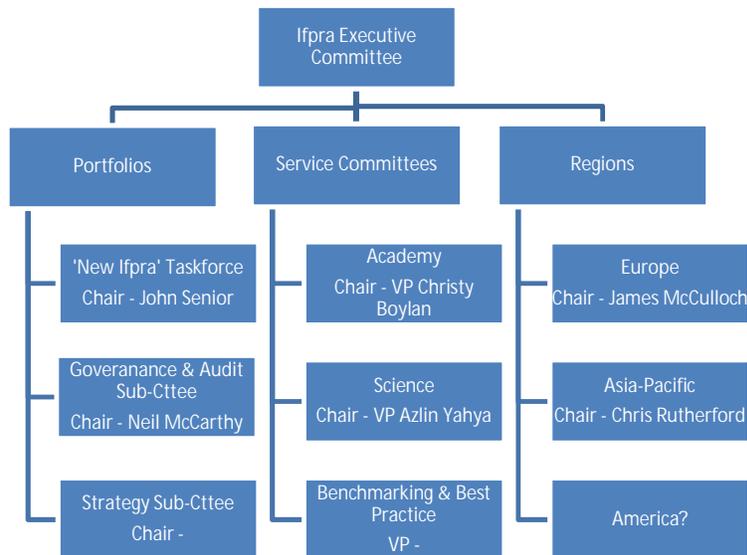
Ifpra e-Newsletter December 2013

A word from the President

Your executive and new secretariat have been working to ensure we get off to a flying start in 2014.

To meet the expectations of the 2013 World Commission and General Assembly at Alberta we have further expanded and revised the three-year budget to deliver our new three-year Business Plan, and this is now with commissioners for consultation.

A second expectation of the General Assembly was the formation of a Task Force to plan the implementation of a "New Ifpra" (a sustainable and inclusive new world urban park organisation) with the plan to come back to the General Assembly later in 2014. We have asked John Senior to Chair this important group that will comprise key Ifpra and external stakeholders. John has considerable experience with international park organisation relations. Complementary to that role Neil McCarthy will Chair the Governance and Audit Sub Committee responsible for the policies and budget performance of the current and new organisation. The diagram below shows leadership portfolios, service committees and regions as they are forming up.



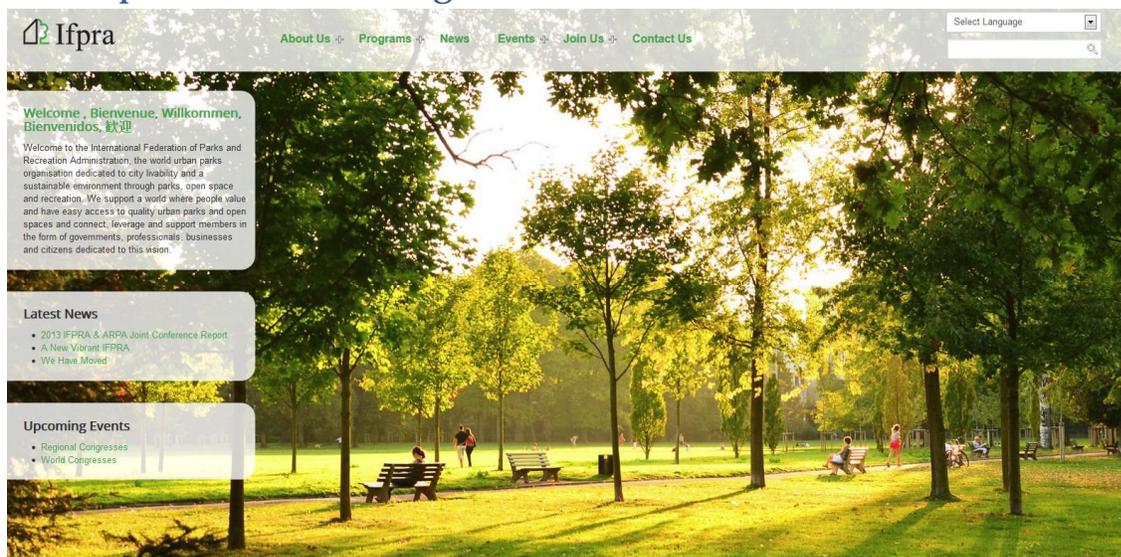
We have approved that the New Zealand Recreation Association, as an incorporated and audited body, administers Ifpra's funds. And so we are transferring our bank account to New Zealand. Financial delegations and policies are in place to provide for secure electronic transactions. Fees and financial information will move to being expressed in both British Pounds and New Zealand Dollars (£1 = \$2).

Members can now view and comment on the new Ifpra website under development with the first stage due to go live in January 2014. We hope to better reflect our international make up, and I thank Daniel Boulens, Anna Steidle, and Sayuri Minegishi for getting involved writing welcome messages in French, German and Japanese.

I would like to wish you all the best for the festive season and New Year.

Emanuel Trueb, President

New Ifpra website coming soon



A new and improved website is being developed for Ifpra members and the wider community who want to keep informed and share information about news, events and the latest research into parks, open space, recreation and sustainable urban living.

The site will feature a 'Latest News' section, information about upcoming events, Ifpra region activity, best practice and benchmarking, science, academy and other services and initiatives. It will also offer a basic Google translate function for non-English speakers and interactive map showing where in the world Ifpra's growing (!) member-base is located.

Members are very welcome to check out the development-in-progress at the temporary web address of www.ifpra.org.nz

Please feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions on how the site can be further improved. We want to look at new ways for members and the community to really utilise the site, and create greater opportunities for people to share ideas and discuss topics they are passionate about. A second stage will provide a members login area and on-line fee payment.

Website content is still being uploaded and further changes will be made before the site's launch in January 2014. Once launched, the site's web address will revert to www.ifpra.org.

At the same time we will introduce a new e-Newsletter-bulletin format that will work in with the website and make it easier for members to keep up with the latest news, events and updates.

The new e-Newsletter format will present latest news at a glance, with easy web links to articles and events on the new Ifpra website and other relevant websites of interest.

All ideas welcome at office@ifpra.org

Ifpra medallist profile - Torgeir Esig Sorensen



In October 2013 incoming President Emanuel Trueb awarded three gold and three silver Ifpra Medals to members who had made a significant contribution to Ifpra. For the next six months we will profile one of our medallists and in this edition, we profile former Ifpra President and Ifpra Gold Medal recipient Torgeir Sorensen.

Torgeir originally qualified as a Landscape Architect with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences in 1976 and was a Landscape Architect with the City of Tromso. He became the Park Manager for the Municipality of Sola in 1978 before becoming the Manager of the Parks Section for the City of Stavanger in 1980. After five years he moved to project management with a private construction firm before returning to Stavanger in 1987 as an economic development consultant and then Chief Environmental Officer. This led to the role of Head of Stavanger's Parks and Streets Department in 1995, the position he has held for the last 18 years.

Aside from being a keen hiker, photographer and master of "Broken English", Torgeir was active in national and regional professional associations, having been President of the Norwegian Forum for Local Environmental Management and of the Norwegian Association for Parks, Sports and Recreation Administration. Within Ifpra Torgeir was Commissioner for Norway in 2000 and Chair of Ifpra Europe from 2003, hosting the Ifpra Congress in Stavanger in 1980. President Elect in 2007 Torgeir became President at the 2010 Hong Kong Ifpra World Congress.

While having made a solid contribution to furthering the parks and recreation profession, it has been his outstanding leadership in the last three years as President that that is most recognised by the Ifpra Gold Medal. Recognising that the organisation required substantial revitalisation to reverse steady decline Torgeir gathered a strong World Executive team, delegating key projects such as the Science Task Force, Ifpra Academy, and World Urban Parks Initiative in conjunction with a substantial international peer review of Ifpra's strategic future. That culminated in further commitment towards a new and extended Secretariat and three-year business plan and budget to bridge Ifpra towards a sustainable 'New Ifpra' world urban parks organisation.

While a significant task remains to fully realise this strategy, Torgeir is credited with grasping the bull by the horns and following through on the vision for a vibrant and contemporary organisation with a bright future. In this he was aided by the 250 members who had stayed with Ifpra as for a cause they believed in and who readily acknowledge Torgeir as a worthy recipient of the Ifpra Gold medal.

Ifpra Europe Commissioners Hamburg meeting

Earlier this year in June, Ifpra Europe Commissioners and members met in Hamburg in conjunction with the GALK (Germany's professional parks association) Conference and Hamburg International Garden Show exhibition. While the following photo is from one of the Conference technical tours of parks in Hamburg, Anna Steidle, Ifpra Commissioner for Germany, has forwarded a link to the photo gallery associated with the Conference http://www.galk.de/links/galk_jt13_fotos.html. You can also read more about the Hamburg events in the June Ifpra World.



Meeting Report: 2013 Ifpra World Congress & ARPA Conference

Contributed by Gilbert Briscoe, Hon Ifpra member

The International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration (Ifpra) and the Alberta Recreation and Park Association (ARPA) held a joint conference at Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada from 24-26 October 2013.

Over 500 delegates registered for the conference, which had the theme of New Horizons: Learning Together. Ifpra was well represented, with nearly 70 members in attendance.

The conference began on Thursday 24 October and offered 54 different workshops in all. However, it was only possible for delegates to attend a maximum of eight. This resulted in some difficult decisions about which to attend.

What follows is a summary of the workshops and plenary sessions I attended.

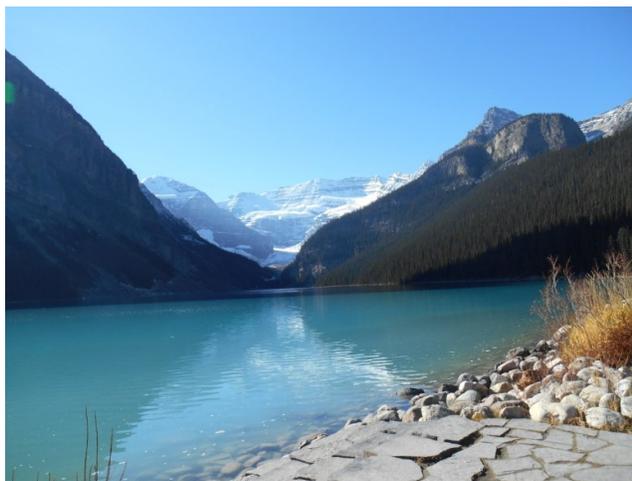
Day 1:

The Benefits of Parks and Open Spaces

This workshop was presented by Prof Anders Nielson of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and Dr Chris Lemieux from the University of Waterloo.

Prof Nielson was part of the team researching park benefits for Ifpra on the basis that scientific evidence is needed to prove the benefits of urban parks and open spaces. The team divided the benefits into eight categories and researched each. A summary of his findings is below.

1. General health - it is believed that urban parks cause social cohesion and a sense of community, but there is little scientific evidence of this. There were however, some positive isolated cases of social cohesion.
2. Tourism - parks are an important reason for visiting cities. There are numerous studies proving this.
3. House pricing - people are apparently prepared to pay between five and 30 per cent more for houses adjoining urban parks. Urban parks decrease crime rates, rapes and noise.
4. Human health - There are direct health benefits such as reduced obesity, stress and mental health.
5. Water Management - urban parks and open spaces reduce water runoff, helping to regulate storm water.
6. Air pollution - Anders stressed the importance of carbon sequestration by trees.
7. Air cooling - urban air was not necessarily cleaner, due to parks and open spaces, but certainly cooler.
8. Biodiversity - birds and other fauna groups were linked to habitat diversity. Species richness increases diversity.



Dr Chris Lemieux also discussed the benefits of parks and open spaces, making the following points:

- Children today spend half as much time outdoors as children did 20 years ago.
- The outdoors is very therapeutic.
- Nature is an important aid to recovery from surgery. Nurses who care for patients benefit equally from the outdoors.
- Parks and open spaces help to reduce childhood stress.
- Emotional, social and cognitive child development also benefits from the outdoors.



Ifpra Certification, Competencies and the Ifpra Academy

The Ifpra Academy has done a lot of good work developing global certification for parks and recreation professionals in partnership with the Epley Institute for Parks and Public Lands.

Epley Institute Executive Director Stephen Wolter and Project Manager Austin Hochstetler erased uncertainties on the Ifpra international certification based on competencies. These are undergoing an international validation and will be available early in the New Year.

Dr Christy Boylan, Chair of the IFPRA Academy, continued the discussion on the work done by the Academy. Members will be hearing a lot more about its progress in the near future.

Cocktail Reception and Opening Ceremonies Banquet

The day's business continued with a cocktail reception followed by the Opening Ceremonies Banquet where Emanuel Trueb, from Basel, Switzerland was inducted as the Ifpra World President for a three year term of office by the outgoing President, Torgeir Sorensen, from Stavanger, Norway.

Urban Nature

Emanuel Trueb's induction was followed by an excellent keynote address from Adam Bienenstock, an award winning consultant on design and construction of regulatory processes in connecting children to nature in our cities, and Robert Voigt, a professional urban planner, specialising in citizen engagement and urban design. They discussed how to bring nature into our built-up environment.

Day 2:

Effective Leadership for Changing Times

Joe Granger, from the City of Calgary, highlighted the importance of leading and managing people and managing yourself.

He then continued with the following:

- Lean Management means knowing your customers and their values.
- What can you do to create more value in your life - both at work and at home?
- Effective communication is essential - this must be a two-way process.
- Are you focussing on adding more value?
- The secret to success is to build a diverse team.

Rebuilding After a Natural Disaster: HANAFU / Canterbury Earthquakes

The mid-morning session dealt with rebuilding after natural disasters.



The first presentation was by Toru Minegishi, a Manager with the Parks and Recreation Foundation of Japan, and centred on the 2011 Earthquake and nuclear disaster in Japan. He shared illustrations from the HaNaFu Project (Harmony with Nature for the Future), which depicted victims and volunteers working together to sow seeds and plant bulbs in the area of devastation. The resulting colour was quite amazing and it demonstrated a people going forward. The 320 ha Michinoku Park is seen as the gateway to the disaster area and it has drawn large numbers of visitors - 76,000 during 2012 - to admire the flowers.

The illustrations also gave recognition to the workers - both victims and volunteers - for their excellent work and their dedication. The HaNaFu Project was the Japanese way of easing the pain of the tragedy.

The second presentation focused on the 2010 and 2011 Christchurch earthquakes.

When one's attention is drawn to the Christchurch earthquakes, you immediately think of the devastation of the buildings in the city and little thought is given to the surrounding Port Hills parklands.

Derek Roozen, a senior network planner with Christchurch City Council, drew our attention to the hazards associated with regional parks and natural areas following the series of earthquakes in Christchurch during 2010 and 2011, in which 185 were killed.

There are always pressures on such pristine open spaces, such as conflicts of interest, fire, slope instability and vandalism. Earthquakes just increase these pressures.

Much damage was done to tracks and roads as well as increased instability to slopes. Sumner Road, which traverses the Port Hills parkland, is the main overland route between Christchurch and the port of Lyttelton and was badly affected by the earthquakes.

Reopening recreational facilities such as rock climbing areas and hiking trails is a big boost to the local community. To achieve this, the instability of the slopes had to be managed, inter alia, by the removal of high hazard rockfall sources. Communication with the public was essential to improve their safety. However, even without further earthquakes, the danger of rock falls will still exist.

Another Way? The UK Park Trust Model

James McCulloch, CEO of the Nene Park Trust (1725 acres), discussed the Trust's mission to provide visitors with a range of opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

To succeed in creating a Trust (not for profit) the local authority, in this case the Peterborough Development Cooperation in 1988, must:

- have political will,
- give up control,
- ensure realistic endowment,
- demonstrate brave thinking, and
- possess business sense and skills.

Fortunately the Nene Park Trust is well endowed with commercial properties that generate sufficient income to manage the park.

Personal Dreams for the Public Good

Manda Wilde, a Parks and Wildlife Ventures Co-ordinator for the Parks and Wildlife Foundation, stressed the following points.

- A poor plan is better than no plan.
- Make promises that you can keep.
- The community is your best friend.

Parks and Recreation Department, Basel, Switzerland

After lunch, Ifpra President Emanuel Trueb spoke about providing playgrounds and community gardens in Basel, Switzerland. He stressed that to be successful playgrounds had to stimulate young children.

The community gardens were allowed to provide limited overnight accommodation, but this aspect was difficult to control being so close to the French border. Emanuel's paper ended the workshop sessions for the day.

Poster sessions

An interesting poster session followed, which included a detailed structure of the Japanese Parks and Recreation Foundation's Qualified Parks Administrator (QPA) certification system.

Another interesting poster was put up by Alberta's Centre for Active Living which, inter alia, aims at increasing the opportunities for people to become more physically active. Every small step counts.

Trade Show

The day ended with an excellent Trade Show in the Mount Temple Ballroom, displaying an impressive array of products available to the industry. There were 38 stalls in total.

It was difficult to single out any particular stand, but the STOPDED display was most educational in their endeavour to control Dutch Elm Disease. The Dutch Elm Disease in Alberta was not only confined to the exotic beetles and elms in transferring the fungus that causes the disease, but to a native beetle which is also 'in on the act' of spreading the same exotic fungus amongst native elms. The banning of summer pruning appears to be an effective way in contributing towards the prevention of the spread of the disease.

Day 3:

Urban Green Structure as a Means of Promoting Public Health and Wellbeing / How Parks and Recreation Spaces Contribute to Health

Torgeir Sorensen, Ifpra's immediate past president and Head of the Parks and Streets Department of the city of Stavanger in Norway, spoke on how urban green structures contribute to the improvement of public health and wellbeing. All citizens of Stavanger live within 500 metres of a green corridor, also referred to as green walk streets.

Little did we know that this would be the last time that Dr David Aldous would deliver a paper to an Ifpra congress. This was to be the last of many stretching over a period of more than 25 years.

David explained in detail how parks and recreation open spaces contributed to the various categories of public health. These categories included physical health, emotional health, spiritual health, social health and economic health.

As always, David put an enormous amount of work into his preparation and one can only gain the full benefit of this paper by obtaining a copy of the original script.

Unfortunately David passed away within a week of the conference. He touched many lives both within Ifpra and beyond. Thank you David and strength to you Kaye.

Ifpra Regional and World Assembly Meetings

There was much work to get through and the various chairs did well to complete their agendas within the allotted time.

After lunch the final conference sessions took place.

Off-Leash Area: Management Plan

The City of Calgary Parks, Animal and Bylaw Services panel presented aspects of their Off- Leash Area Management Plan. One of the driving forces behind this project must have been the large increase in the local dog population. In 2001 there were 95,563 dogs in Calgary and nine years later this number had increased to over 122,000 - an increase of more than 27 per cent!

Today, 17 per cent of all parks in the city – 1,280 hectares - are allocated to off-leash areas. In addition to catering for the large increase in dogs, the city sees off-leash dog walking as a legitimate form of recreation and a way of getting Calgarians to access outdoor pursuits.

Through public participation, the parks personnel are always on the lookout on how to improve off-leash areas. With the help of voluntary compliance with city bylaws, educational programmes and law enforcement, the Department is able to reduce user conflict in these areas. The community is seen as partners and this helps to make the city a cleaner, healthier and safer place in which to live.

Dogs and dog owners are a worldwide urban concern and the Calgary approach could well become a useful tool in reducing conflict in this area of parks management.

The Collaborative Economy

Tonya Surman, a Toronto based social entrepreneur, and founder and CEO of the Centre for Social Innovation, delivered a most interesting and challenging closing keynote address. She predicts that both the concept that “bigger is better” and the fundamentals of capitalism will fall away. Collaborative economy will replace capitalism as we know it today and working together will be the business model of the future.

After this keynote address, there was just enough time for a quick walk or jog in the delightful setting of Lake Louise. The weather, both for the pre-congress tour and for the conference itself, was amazing.



Ifpra and ARPA President's Awards and Banquets

The last of the formal functions, the Ifpra and ARPA President's Awards and Banquets, were held in separate venues.

To the surprise of most, Ifpra President Emanuel Trueb presented medals to those members who were deemed to have delivered exceptional service to the Institute. The recipients were Gilbert Briscoe, Yoritaka Tashiro, Torgier Sorensen, Alan Smith, David Aldous and John Brandenburg (pictured from left to right).

The following morning dawned white as it had started

snowing overnight. It increased in intensity as we travelled to the Calgary airport, two hours away.

So ended a marvellous two week stay in Canada. A big thank you to all those who made it possible, with special thanks to Cliff and Gail Lacey.

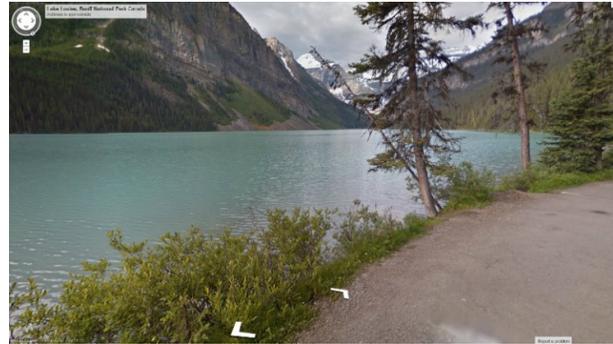
Ifpra has proven a wonderful organisation of networking amongst horticultural and recreational professionals over the years. So it proved again in Canada where delegates from approximately 20 countries renewed old friendships and made new ones. Long may this continue. Changes there will and must be, but the Ifpra spirit of camaraderie must remain.

Canadian national parks debut on Google Street View

Virtual hikes through many of Canada's spectacular national parks are now available on Google Street View.

Parks Canada and Google made the announcement in November, saying the imagery was captured during spring and summer using Google Cars and Google's Trekker Street View backpack technology.

Cliff Lacey, Ifpra Commissioner for Canada, sent in this item and those who attended the 2013 Ifpra World Congress will recognise Lake Louise in Banff National Park, venue of the Congress.



In total, virtual tours of more than 70 national parks and historic sites are available online, and plans are afoot to capture as many as 120.

Leona Aglukkaq, Canada's Minister of Environment and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, said the imagery would allow Canadians and other internet users to discover the country as they had never seen it before.

Visit Parks Canada's website (www.pc.gc.ca) to find out more about the partnership between Parks Canada and Google and the plan to capture imagery of more of Canada's parks and historic sites.

Benchmarking and **YARDSTICK**

The benefits of benchmarking to improve organisational performance have been an increasing focus of Ifpra, as seen with the recent formation of the Ifpra Best Practice and Benchmarking Committee. And while the Committee will have a broad interest in championing and reviewing different benchmarking programs Ifpra is pleased to announce that it has entered into a new partnership with Yardstick to assist with the development and promotion of this international parks benchmarking project.

Originally developed by parks managers looking for relevant and accurate data, Yardstick has retained this feature by supporting user groups and working with users to ensure data quality. As a global product Yardstick is still a benchmark for balancing consistent internationally-comparable measures with regional and nationally desired measures and ensuring 'apples get compared to apples'.



Yardstick effectively and accurately identifies and reports on a wide range of parks management inputs needed to measure performance, make sound and informed decisions, and to assist with determining improvement programmes to achieve best practice. With more than 200 questions covering parks provision, funding, operations, asset management, planning, environmental sustainability and social outcomes, the information provided is comprehensive, and benchmarked against the more than 100 organisations in Denmark, Norway, Finland, Ireland, South Africa, Swaziland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Close off for joining the 2014 project for each area is as follows:

- Europe – February
- Canada – March
- New Zealand – April
- Australia – July
- South Africa - August

Visitor Surveys – best parks satisfaction survey

How do you know that you are meeting your customers' needs in the provision of parks services? What is a good overall score to measure ourselves against? Can you measure your levels of service?

The Yardstick Visitor Survey project is a park user intercept survey which enables organisations to identify their visitors' preferences and establish, measure and record satisfaction levels of the users of parks. The results are benchmarked against other similar organisations to provide meaningful performance measures. The project is supported by a respected research company and the relatively low cost of participation enables organisations to undertake regular surveys which then feed into organisation key performance indicators and help make decisions about monitoring and addressing service level gaps.

Contact chris@yardstickglobal.org to register for the 2014 programme or for further information, or check out www.yardstickglobal.org. You might also contact Ifpra colleagues who participate in Yardstick to discuss the value they get from participating.

Contacts list

Thanks to all who updated their contacts and to Ifpra Japan for engaging their membership in participating – the Ifpra Member Contacts list will be circulated to members only in January 2014.

Upcoming events

We have some great conferences, forums and networking and professional development events planned for 2014 and beyond. Information about all upcoming Ifpra and related events will be available from January 2014 on the new Ifpra website. Event contributions from members and regional congresses are very welcome.

Below are some new up-coming events or updates:

Public Parks and Gardens – Sustainable Experiences Conference in Helsingborg, Sweden; 3 April 2014
Morning - Innovative development of public venues. Afternoon - Restoration of parks and gardens of particular cultural and historical interest with presenters from Italy, Portugal, England, Germany and Sweden. The conference is in English. Registrations due by 10 March via www.movium-slu.se The conference is a joint arrangement between Movium SLU, SSPPG – Swedish Society of Public Parks and Gardens, the city of Helsingborg, the city of Malmö, in cooperation with EGHN – European Garden Heritage Network.

Ifpra Event: Ifpra Asia Pacific Congress 2014, Penang, Malaysia; 23-27/28 June 2014

Subtitled Parks as Melting Pots and Venues for Environmental Learning the Congress is held in conjunction with the Malaysia Urban Forestry Conference and offers Ifpra members opportunities for submitting papers, exploring impacts of multicultural urbanisation, technical in-congress tour and post-congress tour. There will be an Ifpra Asia-Pacific members meeting and pre congress technical visit, networking and potential Yardstick meeting. Indicative registration costs are \$550 USD with post-congress tour or \$500 USD without. A brochure will be available soon. Contact Azlin Yahya at azlin@frim.gov.my or on +603 62797000

Lyon Roses 2015, Lyon, France, 27 May-1 June 2015

The 17th International Convention of the World Federation of Rose Societies should see attendees from 40 countries. Lyon Roses will offer a series of conferences, visits, events, workshops and encounters with some of the city's most beautiful rose displays. For more information visit <http://www.lyon-roses-2015.org/en/index.htm>. Daniel Boulens, Ifpra Commissioner for France and a co-organiser, says Ifpra world commissioners can assist by highlighting the event and website to local horticultural societies.

Correction

The September Issue of Ifpra World credited Gabriele Schetter with the article on Styling Landscape. We missed crediting co-writer Luigi Delloste.

The Ifpra e-Newsletter is published monthly to keep members and interested stakeholders up to date with Ifpra and member activities, news, and items of interest. All member contributions and ideas are welcome and can be e-mailed to office@ifpra.org or ceo@ifpra.org