

## **Jerry C. Calvin-2010**

Following his discharge from the United States Air Force where one of his responsibilities was management of a serviceman's club in Vietnam, Jerry C. Calvin returned to Columbia and the University of Missouri where he completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Parks and Recreation Administration in 1973. He immediately became the first Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Nevada. During his tenure he obtained Land and Water Conservation funds to expand the park system, and was heavily involved in the planning and operation of the City/County Community Center. Beginning in 1976, Jerry served as Moberly's Director of Parks and Recreation for the next 23 years. He completed their first community Parks and Recreation Master Plan increasing the parks system from 250 to 1500 acres and developing over 120 programs and activities. Under his leadership, the Department earned a reputation for innovation in programming, facilities and funding. Jerry retired in 2008 after nine years as Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Joplin where he revitalized an aging and neglected park system. He completed the first Citizen's Park Master Plan and successfully led the campaign for a local parks sales tax generating \$10 million for park and facility improvements. He was also instrumental in the formation of a partnership between the City of Joplin, the National Audubon Society, and the Missouri Department of Conservation which resulted in the construction and operation of the Wildcat Glades Nature Center. A member of the Missouri Park and Recreation Association since 1973, Jerry was one of the key leaders and primary authors of the first state certification plan for park and recreation professionals. He served as the President of MPRA in 1981-82 and 1983- 84, and was elected to the MPRA Trust Fund Board of Directors, serving many years as Chair. He was the chief fundraiser for the Trust where his golf tournaments and "five dollar shakedowns" at annual conferences became notorious, raising thousands of dollars for MPRA. For decades, Jerry was a constant on the Legislative and Critical Issues Committee, a persistent advocate for Parks and Recreation, regularly lobbying in Jefferson City and Washington, D.C. Jerry has been a member of the National Recreation and Park Association since 1976 and is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional. He belonged to the Great Lakes Regional Council, the Continuing Education Committee was a member of three NRPA Curriculum Accreditation Teams. Former MPRA Executive Director Dave Ostlund wrote "During the 31 years I served as Executive Director, no parks and recreation professional gave more of himself to the parks and recreation movement in Missouri than Jerry Calvin." Jerry has received numerous honors wherever he served including, a Citation for Outstanding Achievement and Meritorious Service, the Partnership in Excellence Award for Contributions and Commitments to the Education, Training and Preparation of Future Professionals and the Eyes of the Tiger Distinguished Career Achievement Award all from the University of Missouri. Jerry is a past recipient of the MPRA Fellow Award and the MPRA Retirement Service Award. A constant professional, his 36 years of leadership, passion, and dedication to the field of Parks and Recreation will long be remembered.