

## **J. THOMAS LOVELL, JR.**

Tom Lovell began his career as the first ever Superintendent of Parks and Recreation in Russellville, Alabama. In three short years, Tom grew the department from a single employee with a \$12,000 budget to five full-time staff, 40 plus seasonal employees, and a budget of \$148,000. While in Russellville, Tom developed numerous facilities, secured grant funding for land acquisition, and ensured public access to over 300 acres of lakes, all while establishing intramural programs for teens and a senior citizen program for the community.

After a short stint in Bristol, Tennessee, Tom moved to Lee's Summit, Missouri and applied the skills learned in previous positions, much to the benefit of his new community. During his 33 years at the helm of Lee's Summit Parks and Recreation, he oversaw growth to his original budget of \$327,000 to \$11.2 million upon his retirement. The department ballooned from 11 full-time staff to 42 full-time and over 400 seasonal and part-time staff members, 250 to 1,200 acres of park land, 12 to 30 parks, three community centers, two sports complexes, two dog parks, a skatepark, an amphitheater, an aquatic park, one outdoor ice arena, and the installation of 77+ miles of trails.

Tom presented countless sessions for the National Recreation and Park Association, served in leadership positions in the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration and various state park and recreation associations, and consulted with a number of parks and recreation departments. Here in Missouri, Tom served in a variety of volunteer leadership roles, presented conference sessions, was a Leadership Development Institute Regent and Chair, and facilitated the recreation of the MPRA/KRPA Executive Forum. Nationally, Tom was a founding member of the Supervisor Management School, regent of Revenue Management School, and regent of Director's School.

Tom Lovell has indeed made a profound difference to our profession, our state, our community, and to countless families and individuals. He is the 36th member of the Missouri Recreation and Parks Hall of Fame. Tom has been retired since 2017 and is currently living in Lee's Summit, Missouri.