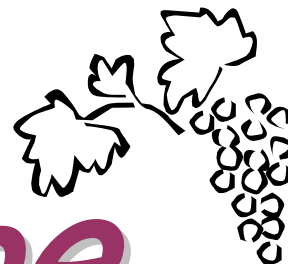




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June  
2012



# the Grapevine

## *Nintendo Wii – Not Just for Kids*

*By: Liz Dieter*

The Nintendo Wii system arrived in my home in the fall of 2007. I must admit, I thought it was yet another waste of money and my adult children's time. After a few days, my son and daughter approached me and said, "Mom, your seniors might really like this", which to my chagrin meant that I would have to learn to play a video game. My previous gaming experience was with Atari way back in my Blythedale days, and I only played that if I had to. I could usually get one of the guys to play in my place while I happily took the kids who didn't like video games off to do a craft or play a "real" game. I even tried Mario Brothers once, but I always seemed to end up falling into some bottomless pit. Reluctantly, I tried the Wii system. First, I tried tennis, then bowling, baseball, even boxing. It was really fun and I was hooked! My kids were right; the seniors might really enjoy this. It really gives you the feeling of playing the sport and if I could do it, it couldn't be hard.

The seniors at the Fox Center in Mount Kisco are wonderfully enthusiastic, so it was no surprise when they agreed to try the Nintendo Wii system. I borrowed my children's device and began with bowling and golf. Once they gained mastery of the controller, the seniors were just as hooked as me. Monday's became "Wii Mondays", and the program began to grow with bowling taking the lead. Seniors created their own Mii Avatars and the game kept track of their weekly scores. Fortunately, grant money eventually allowed us to purchase a Wii system. Monday afternoons at the Fox center are since filled with laughter, encouragement, and

sportsmanship. Our greatest generation can even show us how to properly play a video game!

The benefits of this program were too great to keep to ourselves. The WRAPS group of Senior Center professionals seemed like the perfect way to share it. A brief in-service was all it took to get things moving and in just a few months, Wii bowling took off at other senior centers. Senior Centers started getting together for lunch and bowling. This evolved into an organized Wii bowling league of five senior centers in Westchester. Bedford, Mount Kisco, Port Chester, Rye Brook and White Plains Seniors all had teams. As always, the bottom line was fun.

Although Wii bowling is the most popular program with our seniors, we have also had our own Winter Olympics, complete with fanfare, where we took part in ski jump, slalom and luge. The seniors also enjoy playing Wheel of Fortune; Price is Right, Big Brain Academy and most recently, Jeopardy. The seniors are looking forward to participating in the Summer Olympics- all via the Wii.

The Nintendo Wii changed me as a recreation professional. By stepping outside of my comfort zone, I discovered how much fun video games are. They allow us to enjoy community in familiar ways by playing together in person, or in totally new ways- as in the case of the virtual Wii bowling league. When physical limitations prevent participation in sports we once loved, Wii allows us to enjoy them again. Minds are challenged in new ways with games like Jeopardy and Big Brain Academy. Generational divides are crossed when grandma can play with her "plugged in" grandchild.

So when your children can't find their Nintendo Wii... try calling grandma.

**WRAPS 55th ANNUAL AWARDS  
and SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

**WRAPS 55th ANNUAL AWARDS  
and SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS  
cont.**

**AWARDS:**

Public Service Award ~ Organization  
Harbor Island Conservancy, Town of Mamaroneck

Voluntary Service Award ~ Organization  
New Castle Youth Basketball Association

E. Mario Cribari Voluntary Service Award  
Robert Greason, Town of Mamaroneck

Staff Associate Award  
Bill "Otto" Otivich, Village of Irvington

Youth Sports Coaches Award  
Emily Kehoe, Town of Eastchester  
Jamie Lorenzo, Town of Eastchester

Public Service Award - Individual  
Bart DiNardo, City of Rye

Peter J. Mayers Award for Merit  
Janet Riley, North East Westchester Special  
Recreation

Joe Curtis Achievement Award  
Donna Esposito, Town of New Castle

Irwin "Red" Klein Commercial Recreation Award  
Con Edison

Henry B. Funking Youth Award  
Denis & Kelly Morland, Muscote Farm

**FELLOWSHIPS:**

Dr. Sal J. Prezioso Professional Fellowship  
Kellie Rizzi, Town of Mt. Pleasant

William & Ruth M. Lederer Fellowship & Grant  
North East Westchester Special Recreation ~  
"Garden Program"

**SCHOLARSHIPS:**

Henry B. Funking Youth Scholarship Award  
Kyle Tirpak ~ Somers High School

As of press time, the following individuals are also  
being recognized with Professional Service  
Citations:

35 Years	Janet Riley Joe Falcone
30 Years	Kevin Donnelly John Palmiotto Steve Mott Chris Morabito Kathleen O'Connor William Heidepriem Ray Gomes
25 Years	Maureen DePaoli
20 Years	Joyce Cuccia Jennifer Fava Robert Bertolacci
15 Years	Aaron Podhurst Dana Mayclim Lesley Bornstein Kevin Cook

**WRAPS wishes to thank the following members  
for their service on the Awards and Scholarship  
Committee:**

Kevin Cook, Chair	Brian Gray
Matt Arone	Wayne Bass
Mark Duncan	Donna Esposito
Lesley Bornstein	Sally Veltidi

## ***Presidents Message***

*By: Joe Lemischak*

As we wind down another year for the Westchester Recreation and Parks Society I am also winding down my term as President. I would like to thank the Executive Board for making this such a rewarding experience. This group is made up of great people that have a deep passion for our organization. All decisions that have been made are with the best interests of WRAPS in mind. This certainly isn't the first Board to do this but it is the one that I've had the pleasure to work with. As I leave office WRAPS is in good hands with your next President Kevin Cook. Kevin and Vice President Daryl Sudlow are more than capable in steering the ship. I wish them the best. I would like to thank Kevin Donnelly and Wayne Bass for their years serving on the Executive Board and welcome Karen Kuzio as our new Secretary and Chris Soi as a new Member at Large. It is great to see new faces getting involved with the Society.

As we get into our busy season I wish you all a fun, happy and safe summer. Remember to take time for yourself and family. Lastly, I would like to thank the membership for allowing me to serve as President. It is quite an honor to hold the same office as the many Professionals before me.

## ***18<sup>th</sup> Annual Downstate Conference***

*By: Dana Mayclim*

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Downstate Conference  
Mark your calendars for Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Westchester County Center, White Plains, NY.

WRAPS member Kim O'Brien and myself will be co-chairing the Downstate Conference this year with help from representatives from METRO, HVLSA, LILSA, NYSTRA and NYSRPS. We are currently seeking abstracts from potential speakers. If you are interested in presenting your passions and/or expertise to your fellow colleagues of WRAPS, to colleagues from other districts/affiliates

or future professionals from our local colleges please email either Kim at [Kobrien@bedfordny.gov](mailto:Kobrien@bedfordny.gov) or myself at [DMayclim@lewisborogov.com](mailto:DMayclim@lewisborogov.com) so that we can send you an abstract form. This is a great opportunity to show off how strong and knowledgeable WRAPS professionals are and another great thing is that if you do present at the Downstate you are eligible for a discount towards your registration to Downstate.

Registration materials will be out in the summer! We do hope you will join us as we support the Downstate Conference and WRAPS.

## ***NYSRPS***

### **Highlight Your Community in the 2013 Calendar**

Time to stake your claim in our 2013 Calendar. Showcase the beauty of your community with a photo advertisement in the calendar. This calendar allows your organization to highlight the local attractions and natural areas in your community while providing an attractive everyday tool for your peers, and gaining statewide exposure to decision-makers! This calendar will be distributed, free of charge, to over 1,000 park and recreation professionals, and additional copies will be made available to send to local officials. Sponsorships will be sold on a first come, first serve basis...so act quickly! Contact Meaghan at [meaghan@nysrps.org](mailto:meaghan@nysrps.org) or 518-584-0321 x 12.

### **Compliance Extension for Existing Swimming Pools**

On May 18, 2012, the U.S. Justice Department announced that it is adopting a final rule extending compliance date for sections 242 and 1009 of the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design, as they relate to the provision of accessible entry and exit to existing swimming pools, wading pools and spas. The provisions for existing pools of Title II and Title III entities will now take effect on January 31, 2013. For more details visit: [www.ada.gov/regs2010/ADAREgs2012/finalrule\\_extingpools\\_FR\\_may21.htm](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/ADAREgs2012/finalrule_extingpools_FR_may21.htm).

## *Bits & Pieces*

Congratulations to **Heather Cicco, Recreation Assistant, Village of Mamaroneck**, was asked the big question on April 5<sup>th</sup>, and she said Yes!

### **The WRAPS shuffle continues...**

Congratulations to **Brian Gray** on his recent promotion to **Superintendent of Recreation for the Town of Yorktown**.

Congratulations to **Todd Orlowski** on his recent promotion to **Assistant Superintendent for the Town of Yorktown**.

Congratulations to **Kyle “The Bulldog” Peterson** who was recently hired as a **Recreation Assistant and Tennis Enforcement Officer (TEO) for the Village of Briarcliff**. Since Kyle has taken over TEO duties, the Village of Briarcliff has seen an unprecedented spike in revenue from tennis permits. No one gets past The Bulldog!

Congratulations to **Erin Reidel** on her new position as **Recreation Supervisor for the Town of Yorktown**.

Congratulations to **Matt Trainor** on his new position as **Recreation Supervisor for the Town of North Castle**.

### **Story Time!!**

Enjoyed by kids both big and small!



*Pictured Above L to R: Brian Gray, Briana Gray (hiding behind her father), Aiden Kuzio, Reagan Cook and the story teller, Kevin Cook!*

## *Just for Fun!*

### **IMAGINE.....**

I want you to sit back, close your eyes and think, just for a minute, what it would be like as a recreation professional, if parents weren't involved in youth sports or any youth activity for that matter..... kind of nice, right? No endless emails or phone calls because their child isn't with his/her friends, or how the umpire blew a call that cost their 5 year old the baseball game and hurt their chances at making the Big Show.....ahhh how nice it would be.....

Now WAKE UP, stop day dreaming and put my kid with his friends or I'm pulling him from the program and calling your supervisor!!!!

### **GUESS WHO!**

The Newest Muppet Baby



Can you guess which lucky WRAPS member got to assist John Pizzi during his show at the 2012 Summer Auditions?

**\*\*Answer on last page.**

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**And the Newest Muppet Baby is...**



**Aaron Podhurst, Recreation Supervisor, Town of New Castle!**

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