

the

Grapevine



March 2019 Edition



**WESTCHESTER RECREATION
AND PARK SOCIETY, INC.**

P.O. Box 152 • Valhalla, New York 10595

WRAPS Presidents Message—by Brian Gray

While I look out my window at 8 inches of snow on the ground, turning my clocks forward an hour reminds me Spring is right around the corner. And of course Spring brings with it all the excitement of field preparation, springs sports, lawn maintenance and winter rubbish removal, tennis courts, and not too far off; day camps and pools. I'm sure by now your Spring/Summer Registrations are in full swing and your Departments are busy processing field-use applications, booking trips and entertainment and securing staff for your facilities and programs in preparation for this busy time of year in our profession.



It was great seeing both new and returning Vendors, Entertainers and Members at our annual Vendor Luncheon held at the County Center on Wednesday, March 6th. Events such as this are equally beneficial for all in attendance and I always enjoy watching our Members interact with our Vendors and Entertainers. Thank you to WRAPS Vice President, Dave Goldberg, for putting on a great event. If you did not get a chance to attend this year, please make every effort in the future to attend to support our Vendors and Entertainers. For a listing of WRAPS Vendors and Entertainers please click on the following links:

VENDORS - <http://wrapsny.com/business-partners.html>

ENTERTAINERS - <http://wrapsny.com/entertainers.html>

The next few months are sure to be busy in your professional life as well as within WRAPS. Please note the following important meeting dates and opportunities and mark your calendars now so you do not miss out:

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL & PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

NYSRPS REC SUMMIT in Lake Placid – April 7th – 9th. It's not too late to register – visit <https://newyorkstaterекреationampparksociety.wildapricot.org/event-3149438> for more information and to register. Hope to see you there!

WRAPS WSI Course (\$215 course + \$35 certification) – Saturday, April 6th from 9am-6pm, Friday, April 12th from 4pm-9pm and Saturday, April 13th from 9am-6pm at the Theodore D. Young Community Center (TDYCC), 32 Manhattan Ave. White Plains, NY 10607. Participants **MUST** attend all sessions. To register please e-mail Sally Veltidi @ sveltidi@eastchester.org

Westchester County Health Department – Mandatory Camp Meeting – Thursday, April 25th at the Westchester County Center.

WRAPS May Healthy Initiative – Cortlandt Recreation's Fitness Trail in Cook Park. Wednesday, May 8th.

WRAPS Awards & Scholarships Luncheon – Friday, June 14th at the Shenorock Shore Club. The Awards and Scholarship Committee is currently accepting nominations for the various awards and scholarship opportunities.

Continued: Page 3

WRAPS Presidents Message Continues

I trust you have already heard, WRAPS will be hosting the 2020 NYSRPS State Conference when it returns to Westchester. Conference Co-Chairs, Bob Kaczmarek and Matt Trainor have already established conference committees and have been working very diligently on planning a conference you will not forget! Please keep an eye out for upcoming conference promotional material and fund raising efforts as I am sure they will need the assistance of each and every WRAPS Member as we move forward with this initiative.

Lastly, I am happy to announce WRAPS has entered the 21st century regarding payment processing! WRAPS now accepts **VENMO** for memberships and luncheon payments. The Venmo app can be downloaded from the app store on your phone or electronic device. Once in the app, look for **@WestRec-Society** to submit payments. When paying with Venmo, please indicate what the payment is for (membership, luncheon, etc.). Any questions, please contact the WRAPS Treasurer, Sally Veltidi, at svelti-di@eastchester.org.

In these busy times ahead, make sure you take time to practice what we preach. Nothing is more important than keeping a healthy spirit, mind and body. Make time for yourself and refresh. Whether that be reading a book, go fishing, go on a bike ride or register for an art class – BE SURE TO RECREATE!

DATES TO REMEMBER!

April 25th

2019 Camp Workshop
Westchester County Center

May 25th

Most Pools Open!

May 27th

Memorial Day


June 14th

Awards & Scholarships Lunch

FAMOUS FACES!



Photos: Kevin Cook pictured here with Matt and Kevin Dillon at the Westchester County Hall of Fame Ceremony.



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A VISION OF 2020 for WRAPS

To Our WRAPS Community:

In a little over a year from now, we will be engaged in the midst of a momentous occasion for our Organization. The New York State Recreation and Parks Society have tapped us to put together the 2020 Conference here in Westchester County, and we have accepted the call. For the first time in over a decade, this event – this gathering of Recreation Professionals from all over the state, and in some cases beyond – will fall on our shoulders.

It's a significant thing that it will just so happen to be 2020, and there's no shortage of anecdotes to go along with that year. Focus, Hindsight.....it's all there. However, we've chosen (like many have, Google it!!!) **VISION 2020**.

One definition of vision is “**the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.**” It's this idea that resonates with us as co-chairs; the scope of what we are going to be able to do next year will only be limited by our imagination, our wisdom. It's up to us, plain and simple.

Over these past few weeks and months, many of you have stepped forward to take the lead in some of our most crucial areas of need; others, raised their hands and have volunteered their efforts. We are EXTREMELY fortunate to have such an amazing talent pool, and even more important – so many people willing to apply those talents to the cause.

Mark your calendars – April 26 – 28, 2020 at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown; located on 119 in the perfect central location for those both close and far away. This conference will be drawing Recreation and Parks Professionals from across the State, looking for the experience only Westchester County and NYC can offer – Let's Give it To Them!

As many of you are, the both of us will be attending Summit 2019 in Lake Placid in April. This will be a great opportunity to learn, brainstorm and network for next year; we hope to learn the do's and don'ts, and get the true behind-the-scenes perspectives we need to make next year a success. If you see us around in Placid, don't be shy! Point out to us anything you may like, or – for that matter – don't.

If you have any ideas, questions or something unique you feel you can offer to the Conference, please do not hesitate to contact either one of us. We will be eating, breathing and sleeping “Vision 2020” for the foreseeable future – don't be afraid to join us!

Looking Ahead!



Bob Kaczmarek, Village of Scarsdale

RKaczmarek@Scarsdale.com

Matt Trainor, Village of Pleasantville

RecreationSuperintendent@Pleasantville-ny.gov

Community Spot Light!

This issue will feature Eastchester! If you would like to be featured in the next issue of the Grapevine please reach out to the editor.

Written by Sally Veltidi, Superintendent Eastchester Recreation

Many people unfamiliar with Westchester County ask “Where’s Eastchester?” The reply is usually “Between Scarsdale and Mt. Vernon, you know, where the Lord and Taylor is” and then they know exactly where Eastchester is! The truth is Lord and Taylor isn’t the only thing that draws people to Eastchester. The opportunity for both passive and active recreational opportunities are bountiful and you are sure to find the right fit for your lifestyle.

The Town of Eastchester, which includes the Villages of Tuckahoe and Bronxville has three Country Clubs, Leewood, Siwanoy, and Lake Isle. Leewood and Siwanoy are private Clubs while Lake Isle is a public club with discounted resident rates. Each Country Club has Tennis, Golf and swimming pools, with Lake Isle Country Club having 5 pools and a tennis facility that is domed from October to May. Thousands of golfers, swimmers and tennis players enjoy these facilities each year.



There are 10 parks with playgrounds and ball fields for active recreational use in the Town of Eastchester along with 5 additional park areas for passive recreational use. The active parks include baseball/softball fields as well as fields lined for a variety of other sports such as boys and girls lacrosse, soccer and football. The facility most widely utilized in the town is Haindl Recreation Park. This facility has a turf field lined for all sports including 2 baseball/softball diamonds in addition to an indoor space that can hold meetings, events and classes.

In 2007 Eastchester Recreation started its Teen Scene program. This program is for residents in 7th-12th grade and offers a variety of programs and trips each Friday evening. 12 years later this program is still going strong with over 115 participants. This year members of Teen Scene visited the Great Jack-o-Lantern Blaze, Dave and Busters and attended a Westchester Knicks game at the County Center. Youth also participated in

several in town game nights where they were able to socialize in a chaperoned environment with friends. In the summer Teen Scene members enjoy Pool Parties on select Tuesday evenings at Lake Isle Country Club.

Eastchester has 4 Summer Camps for preschoolers to teens entering 9th grade. This includes the very popular Camp Quest, our Teen Travel Camp. These 4 camps serve over 800 campers and employ 175 season staff. Summer is definitely the most popular season in the Recreation Department. Also in the summer months, Eastchester’s Youth Council puts on a musical production with residents ages 13-21. Their productions include musicals like Cinderella, Avenue Q and Grease. Summer isn’t just for the kids, adults enjoy the Wednesday evening Summer Concert Series, men’s softball league, flag football league and basketball league.



Community Spot Light! Cont.

There are a wide range of special events in the Town of Eastchester including, a Rag-A-Muffin Parade, Easter Egg Hunt, Gingerbread Decorating Contest, Christmas tree lightings, a Menorah Lighting and Gelt Drop and a St. Patrick's Day Parade. The most popular event is always the Columbus Day Carnival and Parade. Held at Lake Isle Country Club, it is not unusual for attendance to peak at 100,000 people over a 4-day span.



In 2014 Eastchester Recreation's Department merged with its Parks Department which includes buildings & grounds as well as the signs, lines and meters. Three years later a second merger took place and the department linked with Senior Programs and Services, this includes the Lake Isle Senior Nutrition Center. The Lake Isle Senior Nutrition Center can see up to 100 seniors per day for lunch and activities and delivers 65 meals per day to the homebound residents of the Town. The Senior Programs and Services department also has 2 other very active Senior Centers in the North and South parts of Town and a very caring Social worker who is always there to help when needed.



Year round there are 14 Full-time employees, 10 part-time employees and 15 volunteers who help make sure all of the divisions of the departments are running smoothly. Add that to the 200 seasonal staff and 75 volunteers and you are left with a lot of moving parts.

Construction has begun on the long anticipated new Community Center in Eastchester which will become the new home of the Senior Nutrition Center at Lake Isle. It will also host a variety of recreation activities in the evenings and on week-ends. This Center is scheduled to open by Labor Day 2019.

The Power of snow!



Photo Above: Staff at Rye Recreation arrived to work one morning to find one of their back-stops laying on the ground thanks to the heavy snow! Mother nature wins every time!

Awards & Scholarship Nominations Due

This is an outstanding opportunity to celebrate those who contribute so much to our wonderful field. Nominations are due by Friday April 5th, 2019. Please contact Angela Thornton at athornton@irvingtonny.gov

Vandalism - What We All Deal With

By –Kyle Thornton, Editor Grapevine, Assistant Superintendent Yorktown Parks & Rec

It was a September Wednesday morning, driving into work when I noticed I had a missed call from our Parks Foreman. Calls from a Parks Foreman in the AM can be normal, but not normally before 7:30am. When I called him back my heart sank a little. These words echoed in my head the rest of my drive: “Good Morning, there was a fire at Shrub Oak Pool, we are there now”.

This wasn't just a fire that happened by accident, this was an act of vandalism/arson. We have all been there, a kid spray paints a wall, someone drives a quad on a field, trash is dumped from a can, glass bottles broken in a parking lot, and the list could go on and on. But arson!?!?! Some of you have dealt with it, but not all. Seeing the damage first hand didn't look like a lot to the naked eye, and it could have been worse if it was the pump room, but knowing how hard my staff worked to make our pool facilities amazing for our residents, it was gut wrenching to see the damage.

Police were called, photos taken, calls to insurance made. There was no time to wait around. We had to catalog what was burned, get quotes, find contractors, clean the facility, and cross our fingers Yorktown PD could find those responsible.



Dealing with insurance is never fun and never will be. They have many questions, and I couldn't answer them all. It was frustrating. But the work had to get done and we needed to get the pool ready for the 2019 season. Many hands were involved in helping figure everything out. Orders were placed, arguments with our insurance company took place, new items were put together, the facility was cleaned and the contractor took care of the new drains and concrete.



Now was it over? No, we had nobody to blame until we heard Yorktown PD had someone in custody and were looking for one other suspect. A young man who was known to police at the time was found through some great detective work. Although we know what led to his capture,

we will just leave it at great detective work in following the leads they had. A 19 year old and his friend decided to have a little party, lit a fire, threw some trash cans, umbrella's, a bench and lawn chairs into the fire which clearly got to big, they took off, and left the fire to burn. The fire caught a drainage system, which carried it along a wall, caught another trash can on fire which melted the lane lines. The fire was so hot it destroyed the concrete under it.

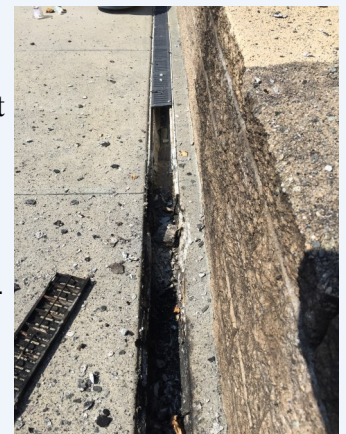


When all was said and done, we were looking at close to \$30,000 in damages from the small area effected.

Whether its vandalism, arson or just poor judgement, it doesn't matter. At the end of the day there are some who won't use their heads and it effect all of us.



This is just our story. My head still hurts thinking about it and we will still see the effect of the fire when we open in September, but it could have been worse. The Brian Slavin Aquatics Facility is a beautiful facility forever scarred by those two criminals. However, we'll deal with it all, move on and hope it never happens again!



Happy Retirement!

Linda Bellofatto

On January 7th 2019, Linda Bellofatto retired from the Pleasantville Recreation for the last time, closing the door with 32 years of service, 21 years working for the residents of Pleasantville.

Linda was introduced to recreation field while working as a tennis court attendant in Yonkers. Augie Cambria suggested Recreation a career and she followed his advice. After graduating from Mercy College she took her first full time position as a Recreation Leader for the Village of Hastings on Hudson. Linda took her next steps as a Senior Recreation Leader with the Village of Ossining and then as a Recreation Supervisor with the Village of Pleasantville. While in Pleasantville Linda was promoted from Recreation Supervisor to an Assistant Superintendent position and ended her career as a Superintendent.

Pleasantville Recreation Department staff, the residents of Pleasantville and all of us who know or have worked with her are grateful for her service, influence and the dedication Linda provided to the profession. Join me in wishing Linda all the best in her retirement.

-Joanne Aquilino

Happy Retirement!

Daryl Sudlow

After a 34 year career as a dedicated professional in the field of Recreation and Parks, Assistant Superintendent, Daryl Ann Sudlow retired from the Recreation and Parks Department at the end of February. Daryl started her career in the Town of Lewisboro followed by the Town of Mount Pleasant before being hired by the Town of Bedford in 2006

Daryl worked for the Town for 13 years as the Assistant Superintendent of Recreation overseeing numerous recreation programs, special events and a variety of administrative duties. In addition, Daryl was responsible for overseeing the staffing, training, programming and daily operations of our three seasonal pool facilities every year.

Daryl also oversaw the three swim & dive teams, working with the parent committees and the coaches to insure the teams had everything they required to run smoothly. Her efforts resulted in a positive summer experience of competitive swimming and diving as part of the NWSC. Daryl was also instrumental in organizing and starting the popular early morning swim program held at the Katonah pool. Staffing the pool with a lifeguard at 6:30am is no easy feat!

In Daryl's "spare" time she was a very active member of the Westchester Recreation and Parks Society (WRAPS). Daryl was elected to the WRAPS executive board in 2001 as the secretary followed by a two year term as vice president from 2012 – 2014 and was elect president from 2014 – 2016. If being on the WRAPS executive board wasn't enough, Daryl served on the Westchester County Health Department Camp Advisory Committee for over 20 years. Daryl is a highly respected professional in the field and was an invaluable resource for many recreation professionals who handled camps and pools, who went to her for guidance, mentoring and her Health Dept. code interpretations.

It is with deep fondness, gratitude and appreciation that we wish Daryl a long retirement of good health, great adventures, the love of family and never ending happiness in her retirement..

-Bedford Recreation Dept

MARINE EDUCATION CENTER

By: Kyle Troy, Naturalist
Village of Mamaroneck



The Marine Education Center at Harbor Island Park in Mamaroneck NY develops educational marine

programs, exhibits and activities related to Mamaroneck's harbor environment. The Center contains multiple aquariums and a large interactive touch tank filled with



marine life sourced directly from the harbor. The exhibits are filled with information which is suitable to all age levels that are developed around the ecology of the Long Island Sound. Admission is free and all ages are welcome to explore hands-on



what lives in the harbor and how our unique marine ecosystem impacts us all. Programs are available throughout the year. The Marine Education Center

is seasonally open between April 26th and November 1st from Wednesday through Sunday from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Visit our website for more information at marineeducationcenter.org or email our Kyle, Troy at ktroy@vomny.org

Bits ~N~ Pieces

Congratulations to **Matt Trainor** on his new position as Superintendent of Recreation at Pleasantville Recreation.

Congratulations to **Kim O'Brien** on her new position as Assistant Superintendent at Bedford Recreation. Congratulations Kim!

Congratulations to **Nicole Stone** on her new position as Recreation Supervisor at Bedford Recreation. Welcome to Bedford Nicole!

Congratulations to **Liz Linsalato** on her new position as Sr. Recreation Leader at Mt. Pleasant Recreation.

Congratulations to **Jamie Corradina** on her new position as Recreation Leader at Rye Recreation.

Congratulations to **Michael Wisniewski** on his new position as Recreation Leader at Tarrytown Recreation.

Congratulations to **Michael Portnoy** on his promotion to full time Recreation Assistant at Lewisboro Recreation.

Congratulations to **Chris Madera** on his new position as Recreation Assistant at Mt. Pleasant Recreation.



To Reach the Executive Board

Brian Gray, President 722-1191
Dave Goldberg , VP 764-3987
Kim O'Brien , Secretary 864-3716
Sally Veltidi , Treasurer 771-3313
Matt Arone, Past President 366-5109

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Matt Trainor 273-3325

WRAPS WEBSITE

Since you are reading the Grapevine on the WRAPS website, why not explore the entire site! Check out our Vendor and Entertainer Members, our social/events page and our NEW Employment page! Have any idea for the website? Email Kyle Thornton at kthornton@yorktownny.org!

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CALL FOR GRAPEVINE ARTICLES!

The next issue of the Grapevine is scheduled to be printed in June 2019!

Anyone interested in submitting materials must do so by **Wednesday, May 29, 2019**

Mail, Fax or E-mail Information to:

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