

the

Grapevine



November

2020

Edition

zoom

Joining a Meeting



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

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

WRAPS Presidents Message—by Dave Goldberg

Dear WRAPS members,

We in the recreation field are trying to reinvent ourselves, departments and programs and in the process save our jobs. This summer certainly proved to test our skills and ability to adapt. During the onset of this pandemic, WRAPS held a series of zoom meeting, every Tuesday at 2:00pm to discuss different topics and the executive board took one topic each and present as short 5 – 10 synopsis, and then it became a sharing of information which lasted about 1 hour. It was well attended by the membership, showing between 50 & 60 participants.



We have had to cancel a lot of our annual programs such as our Awards and Scholarship, our end of summer BBQ and our holiday party along with the Past Presidents luncheon. All our meetings to this point have been held on Zoom and may be for the near future. How I long for in person meetings!

We are pushing forward the best we can, trying to reinvent the wheel and come up with some new and some old ways to recreate and we are always happy to share with our brothers and sisters within WRAPS these ideas. Most, if not all of the zoom sessions that we have done are posted on our website and a lot of our vendors have made available to our residents online programs to entertain them, some free, some at a cost.

I hope all of our WRAPS members stay healthy and focused on our mission of providing solid recreation opportunities for our residents but also, make time for ourselves.

Stay safe, healthy and sane and have a happy holiday season!

David

Community Spotlight- Bedford Recreation By Kim O'Brien

Happy 50th Anniversary to the Town of Bedford Recreation and Parks Department

The Bedford Oak is a symbol of the Town of Bedford, it represents the towns' strength, beauty, and heritage. It is located on the first three square miles purchased in 1680 that became the new settlement of Bedford in 1682. Over the years Bedford grew to encompass the Hamlets of Katonah and Bedford Station/Hills, to what our town is today. The Town of Bedford is now 39.3 square miles, has 18,133 residents (2010 Census) and has a thriving Recreation and Parks Department. The Recreation and Parks team oversees three active hamlet parks, [multiple passive/trail land](#), a dog park, multiple community buildings, historical properties and town cemeteries.

Our three hamlet parks started after World War II, when Bedford residents in all three hamlets realized the importance of creating a park for its citizens. Through land purchased and donations the parks were created, owned and managed by resident organizations. Each park offered different programming and amenities for their citizens. In 1965 the Bedford Hills Memorial Park Counsel realized its financial limitation and reached out to the town to take over the property which formed the first park district in town. The town developed the park to what it is today and with the town's ownership of the park it led to the creation of the Recreation and Parks Department in 1970. In 1974 the Katonah Memorial Park Association sold the Katonah Park to the Town of Bedford for \$1.00. The KMPA still has an active interest in the park and raises funds to carry out projects in cooperation with the town. **At the time of this publication we do not have exact dates or timeline for the Bedford Village Memorial Park.**

All the parks have their unique characteristics, but they also share many of the same amenities such as summer pools, playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, and sports fields. Bedford Hills Memorial Park has a lake for fishing as well as lights on the basketball courts and soccer field allowing for night time play. Katonah Memorial Park has walking trails, paddle tennis courts and a beautiful shelter with a fireplace that was once used when there had been a ski tow and can now be rented. Bedford Village also has paddle tennis courts and has our newest built playground that attracts users from all over Northern Westchester and Connecticut.



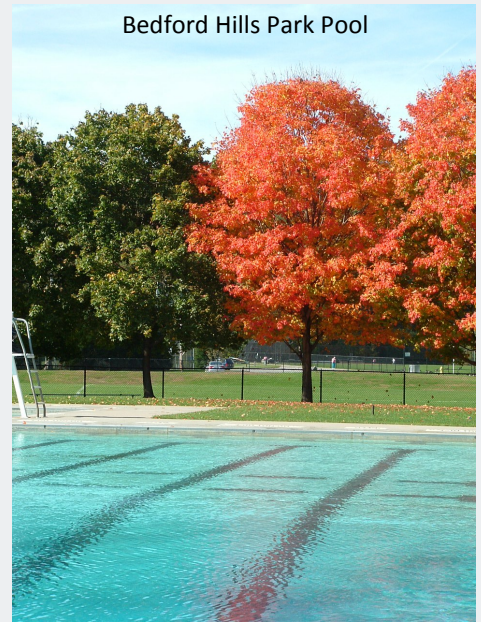
Playground in Bedford Village

Community Spotlight Continued-

The parks in Bedford are used for department programming, by town residents and local sports organizations. During the summer you will see our day campers taking advantage of the great outdoor space in the parks and enjoying our pool facilities, as well as many residents. We work with the Saw Mill Club in Mt. Kisco to offer tennis and paddle tennis classes, and we host many local sports groups that use our fields throughout the year.

In addition to our parks, we oversee the rental and use of the Bedford Hills Train Station and the Bedford Hills Community House. The Train Station is leased from the MTA and programmed through the Recreation and Parks Department. The Community House is owned and operated by the Town of Bedford.

The newest project for the Recreation and Parks Department is the renovation of the Bedford Hills Community House. The house was built in 1919 and opened in 1920 in honor of our heroes that served in World War I. It served as a meeting place and social gathering location for years. This building was overseen by a community group that in 2001 gifted it to the Town. The Building Department maintains the building while the Recreation and Parks Department schedules the use of the building for department sponsored programs and events, along with various meetings for different community organizations. The building has five different rooms of varying sizes to meet different needs and is available to rent for meetings, functions or parties.



The renovation will take months with the anticipation opening of the summer of 2021. The building will be made more ADA compliant and brought up to modern standards. We are looking forward to seeing our 100 year old building receive a facelift.

The Department is also undertaking a fun new project with adding walking trails in Bedford. There are multiple

locations that will be blazed for outdoor hiking enjoyment for the families. Stay tuned as locations and timelines are being set.

Community Spotlight Continued-

One of the different things about Bedford is that the Recreation and Parks Department maintain and preserves active and historical cemeteries with the help of civic committees. There are 7 cemeteries in Bedford we maintain and two are active cemeteries.



2020 has been like no other and although Bedford did open all three of their pools and were able to run two limited day camp program this summer, we are yearning for the time we can bring our seniors back together for big luncheons and fun gatherings, run our food truck festival, egg hunts, tree lighting and more. We want to bring our community back together again. So as we look at what we have and what we offer, **we remember the importance we serve to our communities.** Stay strong, fight the good fight, we will be back up stronger than ever. Get out and recreate at a 6 foot distance.

Best,

The Bedford Recreation and Parks Team



Zoom Is The Place To Be!

**Stay up to date on current and past WRAPS
Zoom Meetings! Lots of information has been
shared and those videos can be found on
Facebook or at www.wrapsny.org!**

5 ASSOCIATIONS ONE MISSION



The Tradition Continues Via **zoom**

Yes, the tradition of Downstate continues online!

Please join us for 5 full weeks of sessions, each week hosted by one of Downstate's Affiliate organizations Westchester Recreation and Parks Society (WRAPS), Hudson Valley Leisure Services Association (HVLSA), New York State Therapeutic Recreation Association (NYSTRA), Metropolitan Recreation and Park Association (METRO), and the New York State Recreation and Park Society (NYSRPS).

While the in-person one day gathering will not be celebrated, this year's multi-week conference will offer incredible professional development opportunities (CEUS), networking opportunities and camaraderie.

Good news! Because our program is spread over 5 weeks, a total of 14 sessions will be offered. That is a total combination of 1.4 CEUs should you attend all courses. A varied schedule of daytime sessions and evening hours will be planned to accommodate therapeutic professionals.

Enjoy programs for a variety of educational tracks !

Synthetic Turf Systems: Infill choices, Design, and Common Pitfalls

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[For More information and to register please go to:](https://events.rdmobile.com/Events/Details/13744)

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New Rochelle Office for Aging - Sarah J. Furlong Rec Supervisor

Since the end of March, The New Rochelle Office for the Aging has been serving our Seniors through home delivered meals from our Nutrition Program, exercise classes broadcasted on NRTV our local cable TV channel, and information, referral, counseling, case assistance, and wellness checks over the phone.

In September, we started welcoming back our seniors to the Hugh A. Doyle Senior Center with exercise classes held outside in our back yard. We have had to cut down our class size from 30 – 40 participants to only 20. We are doing only the seated classes so that we can control social distancing. Everyone is required to make an appointment and wear a mask. Grab 'n Go cold lunches are available from the Nutrition Program. Our in-door programs are limited to Bingo with disposable cards, plexiglass barriers, and limited participation, and Videos shown on our big screen TV to only 6 people. Temperature checks and Participant Health Check Lists have become standard.



On October 7, we decided to celebrate our success with an Oktoberfest. Thank God the weather has been beautiful as we had it outside in our back yard. We started with an Exercise Class and then served our first hot lunch since the pandemic began. Again participation was limited to 30 people, masks were re-

quired and we limited the event to 2 hours. George Lati-mer, our County Executive, stopped by—it almost seemed normal.

Now, as November is upon us, we are planning on bringing classes in-doors due to weather constraints. This will require us to limit participation even more; but we will be bringing back our dance classes which will enable us to accommodate more people. We will also start serving hot meals twice a week with a limit of 3 people per table with plexiglass dividers. Grab 'n Go's will continue to be available.



All of this is an experiment. The situation can change at any time so we must be flexible.

SWITCHING GEARS - Angela Thornton, Irvington Rec



Sometimes it takes pandemic causing cancelations to make room for something special to emerge. Year after year, participants look forward to the fall youth football season. Over the summer months, calls started coming in to our office inquiring of the status of the youth flag football program. As safety

concerns grew, we decided to switch gears. Knowing that feasible guidelines had been successfully used for sports like baseball and softball, the idea for kickball started to brew. We released information to the community unsure if we would gain enough interest to sustain a program. Within a week, the program was at the set capacity with a waiting list. We expanded the



program to accommodate all those interested, which lead to eight teams of excited kids ready to take the diamond. Six weeks later, a program that was not on our radar pre-covid, proved to be one of our most well received activities.

Although we look forward to a time when flag football can safely return, we are happy to welcome kickball to the Irvington Recreation offerings for years to come. Kickball is here to stay!



FAMOUS WRAPS PROFESSIONALS IN THE NEWS!

A Special Softball Player Scores a Special Honor

by Rebecca Worth

With excitement in her voice, SUNY Cortland alumna **Jamie Bucci** recalls the day she found out she was named to the All-Decade team of the State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC). "It's such an honor," says the **Tarrytown** resident. "The Cortland softball program has many talented athletes, so being recognized from Cortland as well as the SUNYAC conference is awesome."

To be considered for the Decade distinction, players must have completed a minimum of one season between 2010-19. They had to be named either All-SUNYAC at least twice or SUNYAC Player/Pitcher of the Year once. Bucci and 13 other SUNY Cortland players met those lofty standards to be named to the SUNYAC All-Decade Team.

COACH DAD

Jamie's love of softball began at a young age. Her family members played a big role in supporting her passion. "My dad was always my coach," she says. "We really had a lot of ties in the community, so growing up and playing in Tarrytown was pretty special."

Besides her family, Jamie looked up to a lot of the older players in the area. "Women's sports weren't always as huge as they are now, so I also saw college players that I got to watch on TV as role models," Jamie says.

Jamie's head coach at Cortland, **Julie Lenhart**, describes the **Sleepy Hollow High** graduate as a tremendous success story. "Her smile lit up the dugout," Lenhart fondly recalls. "She was an unself-



'An unselfish player who would do anything to help her team' is how her SUNY Cortland coach describes Jamie Bucci.

ish team player that would do anything to help her team. What put Jamie in the elite category was her excellence in all areas of the game. She could hit/slap, run the bases, defensively had a cannon for an arm and could catch practically anything hit to the outfield."

TOWN REC SUPERVISOR

Right now, Jamie is working for the **Town of Cortlandt** as a recreation supervisor. She runs youth sport leagues, day camps, and special events for the town. "Playing a team sport has helped me grow and work in the field that I am in now," Jamie says. "I am able to mesh with other personalities and learn to work with people off the field."

SUNY Cortland's softball legacy is to send their players out into the world after college and make an impact. Jamie encourages all younger athletes, especially softball players, to stick with it. "It's a growing sport and it definitely shaped and changed my life."

> sunyacsports.com/sports/sball
Rebecca Worth is a freelance writer based in Northern Westchester.



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Happy Retirement Donna Esperito!

After 34 years with the Town of New Castle Recreation and Parks Department Donna Esperito is retiring. After beginning in the Therapeutic Recreation field, Donna joined the New Castle Recreation & Parks Department as a Recreation Supervisor and later promoted to Recreation Supervisor 2.

Donna was an integral part of both the Department and the Community. Donna not only ran a variety of special events including the 10k/5k road race, Ragamuffin Parade and the Summer Concert series, but was also responsible for overseeing the Community Center and most recently Senior Programming. Outside of her work related responsibilities, Donna also devoted much of her time to the betterment of the Recreation Profession as a member of the WRAPS Award and Scholarship Committee, on multiple NYSRPS Annual Conference Committees and of course as a teacher at Lehman College.

Donna will certainly be missed and we wish her the best in Retirement!



Happy Retirement Maria Gallagher!

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Maria Gallagher who will be retiring in January marking the end of an era in the Recreation field. Maria has not only been with the Town of Mamaroneck for 16 years but has also served working in the communities of the Town of Yorktown and Town of New Castle.

Maria's retirement will not only be a huge loss for the Town of Mamaroneck but also to those that have had the pleasure of working with her as a colleague and friend for so many years.

We want to wish Maria and her husband Denis who will be moving to Saratoga NY the best of luck in all of their future endeavors which we know will involve a lot of Happy Hours. We hope she extends an invite to join them anytime she is back in Westchester.



To Reach the Executive Board

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Kim O'Brien , Secretary 864-3716
Matt Trainor , Treasurer 769-7950
Brian Gray, Past President 722-1191

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Bill Camarra 734-4226
Jen Giusti 273-3000
Bob Kaczmarek 722-1191
Brittany Neider 238-6391
Kyle Peterson 941-6560

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 March 2021!

Anyone interested in submitting materials must do so by **Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

Mail, Fax or E-mail Information to:

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176 Granite Spring Road

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Fax: 914-245-1608

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Are you an Entertainer or a business looking to reach a Parks & Recreation audience? Please check out: www.WRAPSNY.com for more information on how to become a member of WRAPS!

NYS Opening Guidelines

If you have not received - below is a valuable resource as we move forward and continue to reopen.

Statewide guidelines have been released for sports and recreation for regions effective July 6th for regions that have reached Phase 3.

<https://forward.ny.gov/statewide-guidelines>