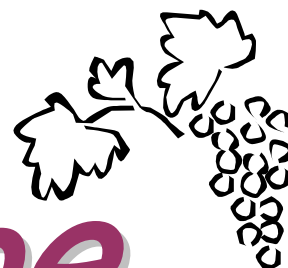




WESTCHESTER RECREATION
AND PARK SOCIETY, INC.

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

November
2017



the Grapevine

President's Message

By: Matt Arone

Although the summer season is supposed to be over, the temperatures are close to 80 degrees as I write this message. But the fall season has begun and I know that because the swimming pools are all closed and camp counselors aren't walking around the office looking for paychecks. I hope you survived the busiest part of our programming year and are enjoying your autumn programming thus far.

Before we close the door on the summer, I just want to say I was very impressed and quite proud of our society during the 60th Annual Awards and Scholarship Luncheon on June 9th. The Awards and Scholarship Committee did an amazing job organizing the event. Chairperson Sally Veltidi from Eastchester and her committee deserve a lot of credit for their time. 17 out of 18 possible award categories were fulfilled including the new Future Mentoring Fellowship which took over a year to finalize the logistics. The room at Shenorock Shore Club in Rye, NY was filled with award winners, friends and family members, past presidents and many other guests. The event has always recapped the accomplishments of a terrific year while marking the beginning of the hectic summer season for all of us. Great job.

The change of season brings a change in our executive board. At this time I'd like to welcome Matt Trainor from North Castle to our board and thank Ike Kuzio for his many years of service. Although we will miss Ike, we are happy to have Matt join us as a member-at-large and we promise to keep him busy.

It was good to see many of you at our annual Kick-Off BBQ back in September. WRAPS Vice-

President Brian Gray spiced things up at Macy Park in Ardsley by having some live music and lawn games to keep us entertained. I really enjoyed watching the folks break a sweat while playing corn hole and Can-Jam. For those who didn't feel like participating in the fun and games, Brian, Dave Goldberg, Dave DeLucia and others rocked the pavilion.

At that luncheon, WRAPS announced that we were reaching out to all our members in order to try and help those affected by the recent hurricanes that touched down in our country. Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma were two of the many storms that have devastated areas south and southwest of us.

As recreation professionals, we can all understand that the parks, playgrounds, community centers and other recreational facilities have been affected as well. Not just personal property has been destroyed. Parks and green space were damaged from the heavy rain and high winds. And the folks that maintain these facilities were dealing with tough times too. WRAPS has proven itself to be a devoted fraternity of members built on close ties to our fellow professionals and the residents we serve. So the WRAPS Executive Board identified two separate funds that were geared and focused on helping rebuild the parks and recreation facilities in Texas and Florida. The National Recreation & Park Society endorsed and recommended the "Houston People & Parks Hurricane Relief Fund." The Florida Recreation & Park Association listed the "Florida Together Relief Fund." Both funds were dedicated to collecting monetary donations to assist recreation agencies, facilities and professionals recovering from these natural disasters. The WRAPS Executive Board believes this was a meaningful cause and committed to making a

monetary donation towards these relief funds along with help from our membership.

WRAPS pledged to match up to a minimum of \$1,000 raised by our fellow members, friends, family members and co-workers. We will split the amount raised between the two above mentioned funds. Thanks to those of you that were able to donate. You made a difference and helped people affected by the hurricanes rebuild recreational facilities and aided in helping various communities heal. This is just another example on how being an active part of WRAPS can be so rewarding.

I hope to see everybody this fall and winter in attendance at some of our many events and programs. The NYSRPS Downstate Conference is in November and WRAPS always plays a big role. This conference proves to be a bit more focused on municipal recreation topics this year so please try your best to attend. And the annual WRAPS Holiday Luncheon is in December at The Kittle House. For years, Roseanne Saracino has organized this festive holiday event. I'm hopeful you can take time out of your busy schedules to help celebrate the holidays with friends from around our professional membership. Plus we always have some great door prizes, fun raffles and of course, the annual tradition of "The Passing of The Lancers Bottle." But until then, please enjoy the rest of the fall, get ready for the winter and continue to embrace all the changes we encounter in our profession.

"It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones who are most responsive to change."-Charles Darwin



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DATES TO REMEMBER!

December 5th

Past President's Luncheon

December 14th

WRAPS Holiday Luncheon

January - TBD

Summer Auditions

February - TBD

Vendor Luncheon



Photo: Yorktown Parks & Recreation Superintendent Todd Orlowski is enjoying the view and change of leaf colors from The Old Quarry off Stoney Street in Yorktown Heights, NY.



Photo: Can you guess this Rec Professional who is learning how to "ifly"? If you guessed Recreation Supervisor Aaron Podhurst of New Castle Recreation, then you win!

Up In The Trees

By Angela Thornton

On Saturday, September 16, 2017, Irvington Rec. & Parks took forty 6th-8th graders with four chaperones to climb up in the trees on the ropes course of The Adventure Park at the Discovery Museum in Bridgeport, Connecticut. This trips proves to be one on of the highly rated trips on our end of summer travel camp surveys for the department's TEENScape Summer Travel and Sports Camp for this same age group.



The adventure park is a ropes course up in the trees including a range of difficulty levels for participants to challenge themselves according to their comfort zone. The ropes course includes exciting zip lines, ladders, tight rope walks, swings, and much more all while safely secured in the double locking harness system.



To offset the cost of this day trip for parents, we sought sponsorship for the cost of transportation. The iASK (Irvington About Safe Kids) Committee is a group of community leaders and volunteers who

work together to implement programing and strategies to promote safe, healthy and responsible decision making and reduce youth substance use. Since the trip was seen as a means for students to engage in positive, stress reducing activity, it was a great fit. The financial support from iASK was used directly to pay for the bus and was a huge asset in allowing us to keep the cost of the program down.



We added this fall trip to our line up in September 2016 under the label "TEENScape Off Season" as a way to introduce the new 6th graders to our TEENScape summer program. We noticed numbers started to drop a little bit in our summer program with more kids doing specialty sports camps and sleep-a-away programs. Bringing more awareness to the program through this fall trip proved to do the trick with many of the kids who joined us in the fall also were a part of our program the following summer.



In addition to having an amazing day up in the trees, all participants received a commemorative t-shirt they wore while they climbed and to have as a memento of a day full of adventure and memories.

Municipal Spotlight

This Issue: Pound Ridge

Each Issue, the Grapevine would like to do a "Municipal Spotlight" to share with you some information on an area you might not know as much about. This week we share with you 'Pound Ridge'. This issues spotlight was written by Dave Goldberg who is the Superintendent of their Recreation Department.

Pound Ridge is nestled in the southeast corner of Westchester County just over the New Canaan Connecticut border. It has a population of about 5,000 residents with no bus or train stations and no traffic lights.

Pound Ridge was officially incorporated in 1788. In 1925 Westchester County purchased over 4,000 acres of land in northern Pound Ridge which is now known as Ward Pound Ridge Reservation. The Pound Ridge Recreation and Parks department has been around a long time, and I have been the department head since 2005.

We offer standard programs such as camps and basketball, and we run 3 pools at our town park. Our camp usually has between 250 and 300 campers. We have added a family campout, a music-by-the-pool series and a few open mics at our "community" center which is an old church. Ten years ago I introduced a flag football program that started with 50 kids in the town park. This program has grown to 350 players in 5 different leagues starting with kindergarten and going through 9th grade. In the winter, other than basketball, things are quiet and I try to keep the pond in the town park cleared of snow so the residents can get in some ice skating, they truly look forward to the opportunity to skate.

Since I have been with the Town, we have had a referendum to build a community center with a gym, art room, offices, and locker rooms with showers. The referendum past in 2008 but was designed as a "not to exceed" \$4.5 million dollars regardless of the source of funds. We could not get

the estimated cost below \$5.1 million. Instead of building the new community center, we did a renovation of our pool house and a remarcite to the pools surface. The department is small, a Superintendent, Office Assistant and a half time Senior Director. My responsibilities include the pools and 3 parks and I enjoy a great working relationship with the Town's maintenance staff of 4 who gets the necessary work done in the parks and pools.

We hold a huge 4th of July celebration with between 3000 and 4000 people. Most years Pound Ridge resident Richard Gere hangs out and watches the show. The day will start off with a 5K road race that draws about 300 runners and then the rush to claim a spot on grass at the town park, set up picnic tables and enjoy the night with friends and neighbors.

Our senior program does a lot thanks to our Director. She may be part time but gives the position full time attention. She started a chair yoga program about 6 months ago and participation is now 25 – 30 seniors on a regular basis. She then decided to follow that up with what she calls "Café Conant" where, after the chair yoga, the seniors sit around have coffee and Danish and just talk and most of them stay and love the ability to chat with others. Our seniors go on a lot of trips, whether it is shopping or to museums, and once a year we go to Mohegan Sun, which is sponsored by our local PBA.

Pound Ridge may be a small town with a small department, but we provide the residents with lots of opportunities, and they appreciate that. My slogan is, "it's easy to do nothing....I don't like easy."



WRAPS Poker Run 2017

The WRAPS Poker Run once again was a huge success with 18 total teams signed up this year. Special thanks to Brother Jimmy's BBQ, Brazen Fox, Ron Blacks, Lazy Boy Saloon and Whiskey Creek of White Plains for hosting our group again this year. Each bar offered a variety of drink specials and even Samuel Adams wanted in on the fun providing 2 custom coolers to be raffled off!

Ike Kuzio, Superintendent of New Castle Recreation, once again led the event. Ike brought in some new ideas which included publicizing the event on Eventbrite which brought in 4 outside teams! Also new was the Wild Card Raffle: Allowing teams to purchase chances to win a Wild Card that could be used to substitute for one of their 5 poker cards. This card paid off for the winning team as it changed their hand to take home the \$400 1st place prize!



WRAPS was able to raise some money and have a bit of fun at the same time.



Congratulations to Jillian & Jeffrey Laufer and Donna & Robert Aversano (Above) for taking home the top prize with the best poker hand.



Pictured Above: The winning team for best custom! Liz Linsalato, Greg Bean, Jen Guisti and Paula Wilder. Who votes for Greg to have to wear that to work every day for 2018?

A big THANK YOU to all those that helped make this year's event a success, including Matt Arone, Dave Goldberg, Frank Bernabei, Daryl Sudlow, Erin Mantz, Christine Grey and Irvington Rec!



Photo: You aren't seeing things! That is in fact Jay Leno hanging out with Daryl Sudlows Team! This event is so popular the Stars come out to witness it in all its greatness!



For more pictures from this event along with pictures from other 2017 WRAPS events please visit www.wrapsny.com or the WRAPS Facebook Page.

Bits ~N~ Pieces

Congratulations to **Sandy** (Superintendent Recreation Village of Mamaroneck Recreation) and **Pete Korkatzis**, on the birth of their son, Andreas Charles (7 lbs. 2oz. and 19 inches), born on August 29, 2017



Congratulations to **Kyle** (Recreation Supervisor Briarcliff Recreation) and **Jessica Peterson**, on the birth of their son, Chase Kyle (7 lbs. 7oz.), born on October 31, 2017.



On October 14, 2017 in Binghamton, NY, **Jon Jacoby**, Recreation Supervisor for the Town of Cortlandt, was inducted into the Francis Mott NYS Softball Hall of Fame for his exceptional Fitch Pitch Softball Skills! Congratulations Jon!



Congratulations to **Tim Fisher**, Recreation Supervisor for the Town of Cortlandt, on his recent engagement (September 12th) to Kristen Ribnicky! They are set to Marry in April of 2019.



Congratulations to **Matt Arone** on his new position as Superintendent of Recreation at the Village of Sleepy Hollow Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Kendra Garrison** on her new position as Superintendent of Recreation at the Village of Dobbs Ferry Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Chris Soi** on his new position as Assistant Superintendent of Parks & Recreation at the Town of Yorktown Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Erin Mantz** on her new position as Assistant Superintendent of Parks & Recreation at the City of Rye Recreation Department.

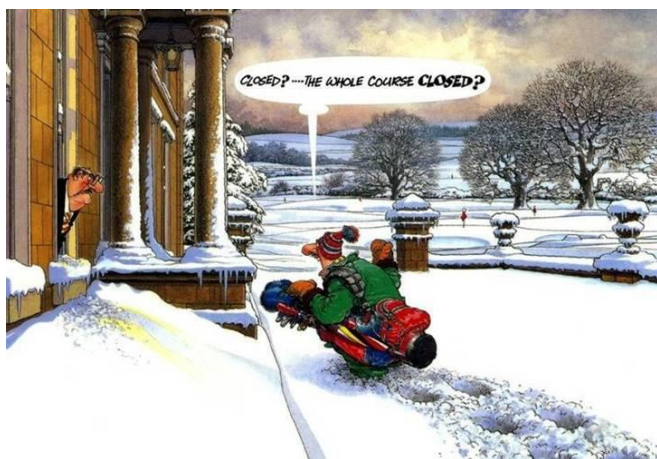
Congratulations to **Lauren O'Connor** on her new position as Recreation Supervisor at the City of New Rochelle Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Dan Walczewski** on his promotion to Recreation Supervisor for the Village of Scarsdale Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Doug Scott** on his new position as Recreation Supervisor at Eastchester Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Ariel Hernandez** on his new position as Recreation Leader at the City of White Plains Recreation Department.

Congratulations to **Deanna Peterson** on her new position as Recreation Assistant at the Village of Scarsdale Recreation Department.



Condolences

Betty Larsen Giaccio passed away on October 30 at the age of 94. Betty worked as the Recreation Assistant for the Village of Ardsley's Community Center from 1990-2005 and for many years was the only person employed by that department. Betty was also mother of six, grandmother of nine and great-grandmother of five.

2017 Summer Kick-Off BBQ

Here are some photos from the 2017 September WRAPS Kick-Off BBQ which was held at the V Everit Macy Park in Ardsley, NY. Great gathering of Rec Professionals!



To Reach the Executive Board

Matt Arone, President	366-5109
Brian Gray, Vice President	722-1191
Sandy Korkatzis, Secretary	777-7784
Erin Mantz, Treasurer	967-2535
Daryl Sudlow, Past President	864-3715

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Dave Goldberg	764-3987
Bob Kaczmarek	693-8985
Kim O'Brien	864-3716
Kyle Thornton	245-4650
Matt Trainor	273-3325
Sally Veltidi	771-3313



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CALL FOR GRAPEVINE ARTICLES!

The next issue of the Grapevine is scheduled to be printed in March 2018.

Anyone interested in submitting materials must do so by **Wednesday, February 21, 2018**

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