



Accessible Fun Day 2026 Comes to RCC for the 3rd year

BY: Keith S. Shikowitz, Editor in Chief/Investigative Reporter

Rockland County does a lot of activities for the communities. One of which is the Accessible Family Fun Day at RCC. Senator Bill Weber has one of the biggest booths of games at the event.

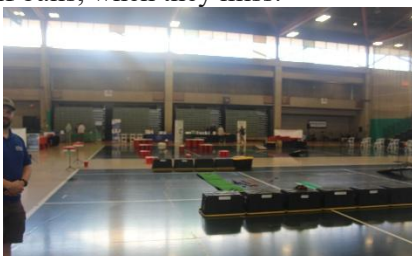


We're here at the Accessible fun day, with John Mulgrew, State Senator Bill Weber's, Chief of staff, tell us about the show here, the activities.

"Yeah, so this is actually the 3rd year they're hosting the Accessible Fun Day. They got rid of the word family because it is during the school day, but a lot of our signage still says Accessible Family Fun Day. It's the 3rd year we're doing it. We've been partnered with the Rockland County Office for People with Disabilities. It is their event, but we've taken a big role. We set up a lot of games. We have by far the biggest space."

"A lot of the vendors are 10 by 10, we're 80 by 80, so we have a number of different games from, ball pong, cornhole, ladder ball. We have a fun, picture booth set up, all sorts of different stuff, and as we've been doing this each year we've kind of seen what works, seen what doesn't, so we're able to kind of focus in on what the kids and the families, are enjoying."

They use that information and revise games each year. They're focusing more on one type of game or another, based on what seems to get the better response like putter ball, for example, that always gets a good response, so they built barriers behind it so that the kids don't have to go and chase the golf balls, when they miss.



Which game did you have that you said, okay, nobody's playing them, so we're going to get rid of them.

"We had a smaller version of the ball pong, which was not nearly as popular. When you have, one set up that's, basically a bunch of painted recycling bins, that draws them in when you have the smaller cups, it doesn't really draw as much attention.

<https://youtu.be/Y2FPwu2gmlk>

One of the booths was run by the Office of the Aged where they were making animal and other shaped balloons.



<https://youtu.be/-bmfFLdnZmg>

After the dog, she made a flower. "Sometimes the flowers have a lot of twists, but not always. Sometimes that pop that we run for him.

I'm here at the Office for the Aged booth with Director Cheryl Ward.

What does this agency do? What services do they provide?

"We provide services for older adults in within Rockland County. Anything that's needed. We can provide personal care services, meals to homes, congregate meals, social supports, and wellness activities." Ward replied.

<https://youtu.be/N820F8sG6J8>

They have their volunteers there, Rockland senior volunteers, and clowns as part of that volunteer program. They have a, a quite a robust volunteer program. According to Ward. The Clowns R Us, they go to places and do performances and They go to nursing homes, to children's events and anywhere that the request is needed.

Oh, they're making swords. Watch out. Don't want the kids to have that. Said with a laugh... You'll see a lot of kids going with the balloons all day sword fighting.

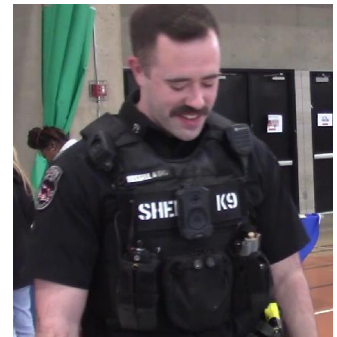
What was the thing that has given you the most rewards?

"When I'm interacting with older adults. I've only been at the department for 20 months, I'll have to say the most rewarding is when we launched our portable meal program. It allowed us to get meals and food to clientele that we weren't able to reach prior. The appreciation when they come and pick up their meals is just, it's amazing. I have a huge picture in my office of 1 client, receiving her meals and the joy that it provided for her is, is just..."

Is it all meals, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, or just dinner?

"Well, the portable meal program is frozen meals a week, so then they have to supplement from that, but at least we can get them 5 frozen meals a week." She stated.

I'm here at the Accessible Fun Day at RCC with Officer Russell from the Rockland County Sheriff's Office and who's this this is my canine partner Galvin. Tell us a little bit about Galvin.



"So, Galvin is a 3-year-old German Shepherd. He came from Holland originally, and he's dual certified in patrol work and explosives detection. So, what that means is, he can track people, he can locate evidence, apprehend suspects, and he can also sniff out anything that might go boom or hurt people in the county. So, we use him a lot for those things."

I'm with the Rockland County Sheriff's Office canine unit. Galvin took did about 7 months of training. It took 4 months for us to get certified and another 3 months to get certified in explosive detection. 7 months in total, broken up into 22 different schools.

How do you train him to find like the explosives? Do you guys put like fake explosives somewhere?

"That's a good question. We use real explosives that won't explode, obviously, but we use real explosives and we start associating a reward with the scent. We make him smell the explosive and then he gets his toy like this right here. Then he starts to realize, oh, when I smell this, if I do something for him, it'll be a sit or go and do a down where the explosive is. Then he will get his toy. So once they associate the reward with the toy, then that's how they start to learn that that's how they spell it out.

<https://youtu.be/Y9xSzYrCftw>

I'm here once again at the Accessible Fun Day with Emily and Joe from Bridges. Tell me about what Bridges is?

Emily replied, "Sure, Bridges is an independent living center in Rockland County. We're located in the Palisades Mall, and we support with disabilities, veterans, justice involved individuals, and the elderly. Joe and I primarily work in employment, so we help with work readiness, job placement, advocacy training, and we also both run social programming. We have one program for youth and a new program for adults that's starting at the end of this month, so we're excited about that.

It used to be Rockland Independent Living Center and then became Bridges, and now they're Bridges and AVI incorporating the vision services. She was not sure of the exact year, tis happened but it was before, before Joe and she were there for sure. "Before our time."

I mean, what do you guys think about this fun day?

"It's only the first hour and it's a really great turnout so far. Our only concern is we might run out of our stress balls, but it's a good event, a great way to get the program information out to the community."

Josh Grinstead and Brian Salvason run a fitness place called Gym Guys which is a field-based fitness company.



"We are the world's largest in-home personal training and on-site fitness provider. We're in 7 countries. Our location launched 10 years ago. For Rockland County, Hudson and Bergen Counties in New Jersey, we do in-home personal training, on-site fitness classes of all levels and modalities for clients of all experience levels and abilities, whether it's in home personal training or our adaptive training, whatever your needs are, we got your back." Grinstead said.

How long have you guys been in business like Gym Guys in general? "Gym guys in general, started about 18 years ago out of Long Island, and we're 10 years old locally and we've done over 100,000 sessions. Our reviews are off the charts. All the trainers are certified, experienced professionals, great at what they do, customized workouts at your home or location of choice." Josh stated.

"Brian's being humble. He's the manager of Rockland County, and his job is to make sure you're experienced rocks, and if you meet our trainers, they're off the charts.

https://youtu.be/q1DExHK26_g

Detective Tim Hayes, whose partner is Remy, a police dog who can sniff out hidden electronics was there to put on a demonstration of how Remy is their office's favorite asset does her job. Remy is a Labrador retriever. She's 3 years old and she has a very unique skill set. She's an electronic detection canine. Does anybody know what that is?

<https://youtu.be/qeWuBtx9eUU>

"She gets a little nervous at first. Like I said, she's only 3 years old. But when she gets to work, it's pretty impressive. I put out a few hides over here. Remy doesn't know where they are. I'll demonstrate how we do, a search, if we're looking for a particular, item in a house or on a property or something like that or a building, and then, also I forgot to mention there there's two types of dogs when rewards come into play. There's a food-based reward, which means that if she finds something that we could give her a treat. Remy is a toy-based reward, meaning that she could only ever have a toy or her tennis ball is her toy, so she never really gets to play with toys, and that makes it special when she finds something that she gets to play with it, but she could have as many treats as she wants, so I'm sure she'll, you know, she'll go with that trade-off."

<https://youtu.be/eLqr1qAmmK0>

"So that's how Remy would help us in our investigations if we need to go through a house and someone's hiding something in wallpaper, underneath the carpet or floorboards and a ceiling tile, she's able to go and detect them. We've done quite a few search warrants. We've got some great results."

The event ran until 2 pm and people seemed to be genuinely enjoying themselves. Everyone was all praises about the day and the booths. They are looking forward to next year's event.