

# Colorado State Library



Building relationships between communities and libraries!



"Games are drawing attention in libraries as successful outreach tools for tweens, teens and seniors. They are also gaining ground in schools as valuable resources that introduce and reinforce a variety of curricular, social and life skills" - LibraryGamer.wordpress.com



# Gaming in School Libraries

"Students are interested in the gaming and freedom offered in this kind of club, and they tend to be interested in other aspects of the library while they are here (they check books out, learn the catalog system to find things, etc...)"  
- Ryan Self, teacher-librarian, Wheat Ridge Middle School

## Ideas for your school library gaming events:

- \* Dance Dance Revolution Aerobics Club
- \* Student/student government organized tournaments and fundraisers
- \* Safe after-school activities and clubs/reward for students
- \* Tool for a student to become the expert & a teacher

# Gaming in Public Libraries

"I hope that librarians and the general public know the importance of offering quality programs that meet both the educational and recreational needs of the community. I firmly believe that gaming programs do both."  
- Julie Zeoli, Yorba Linda Public Library, CA

## Ideas for your public library gaming event:

- \* Guitar Hero and Rock Band Video Tournament
- \* Senior or Senior/Teen Bowling Tournament
- \* Mom's Dance Dance Revolution Night

# Need Convincing?

## Video Games, Literacy, and Learning

Numerous proponents of gaming argue that video game play enhances all types of literacy skills. Neiburger (2007) discusses how, in an increasingly visual society, the ability to interpret on-screen stimuli is a valuable new form of literacy. Video games, he argues, help players develop visual literacy and spatial reasoning. Neiburger cites a study by Dr. James Rosser at Beth Israel Medical Center in which surgeons who played a simple video game for three hours a week performed 27 percent faster and made 37 percent fewer errors than those who didn't play video games.

Gee (2004) identifies dozens of learning principles good video games incorporate. Among them are: identity (good games require players to take on a new identity in order to master a new domain); risk taking (because the consequences of failure are low, players are encouraged to take risks, explore, and try new things in a safe environment); systems thinking (players are encouraged to think about relationships – not isolated facts and events); and lateral thinking (players must think laterally to conceive goals and solve problems).



"What I have noticed is that once the video games get [teens] in the door, they look around and see other cool things that we have going on here."

- Toni Weller, teacher-librarian, Falcon Bluffs Middle School

## Games in the Classroom

Teachers and educators who have used video games in their classrooms have important insights as well. MacKenty (2006) found students are willing to expend considerable energy to understand and play games successfully; students learn how to work together to solve common challenges in games and are enthusiastic about the material. MUVE (multi-user virtual environment) computer games have been used successfully in schools for many years. A 2004-2005 Harvard study found one class that used a MUVE game to learn about biology and epidemiology saw a marked decrease in absenteeism over the lifespan of the project (Blaisdell, 2006).

# Reaching the Disconnected

Neiburger (2007) advocates gaming as an opportunity to bridge “the yawning chasm” between libraries and teens/young adults, many of whom do not see the relevance of libraries in their own lives.

Gaming events could also be useful for outreach to the 3.8 million young people Degyansky

(2008) identifies

as “the disconnected” – 18-to

24-year-olds who are

neither employed

nor enrolled

in school.

"From personal experience, I can tell you that gaming events are among the most popular programs that we offer across all age groups and have really helped to bring in more long-term library users who have discovered our books, computers, research services, etc during their time in our buildings for gaming. **If you play it, they will come.**"

- Paul Stonebridge, Pasco County Library System, FL



## Games in a Social Context

A recent, highly-publicized study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that not only is gaming ubiquitous among teens (97 percent of respondents play), it's a major component of their social experiences. Three-quarters of respondents play video games with other people in the room or connected to others via the Internet –often with people they know in their off-line lives (Lenhart et al., 2008).

According to the study, many teens' gaming experiences parallel civic life (such as helping others, learning about problems in society, and/or making decisions about how a community should be run). Civic gaming experiences are more equally distributed than other civic learning opportunities, and some aspects of social game play are related to civic participation (Lenhart et al., 2008).

# Buying a Game System!

## What you need

### Required Equipment

- Console
- Two controllers
- Games!
- Projection screen & projector, or a TV

### Optional Equipment

- Rechargeable Batteries (AA's)
- Battery Charger
- Power Strip
- Extension Cord
- Speakers and AV cord for music (necessary for Guitar Hero or Rock Band)

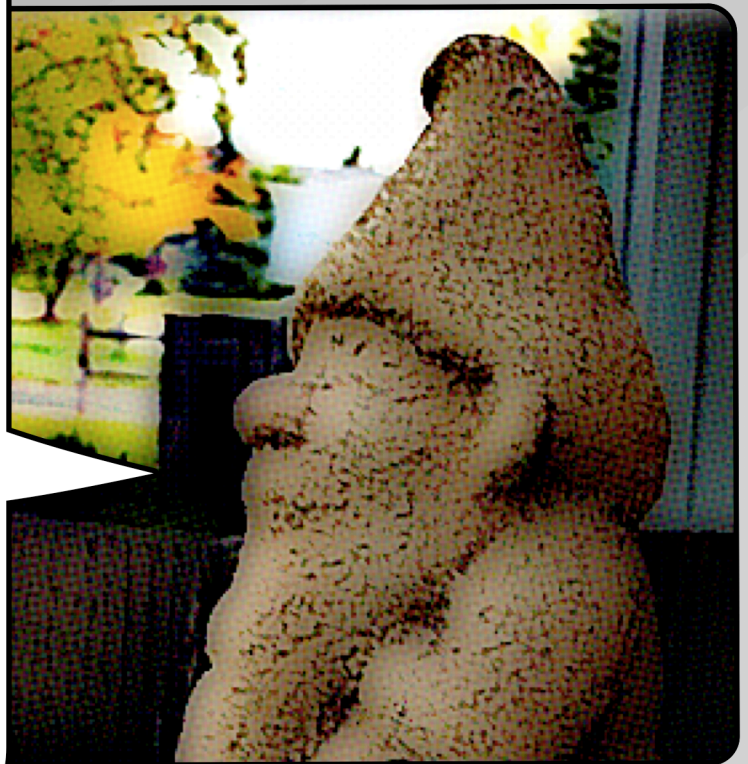
## Where to buy

### Equipment & Games

- Ask for patron donations
- Search for used games on Amazon.com & Craigslist.com
- Visit garage sales
- Look for used games at locally owned game shops
- Buy from national chain stores like Gamestop, Walmart, Toys R Us and Target

## Buying Tips

- Buy used to get the most out of your budget!
- Look for a console bundled with games and/or extra controllers to save money
- Look for games bundled with the accessories needed to play the game
- Ask local game shops if they give discounts to libraries and for ideas, promotions, and prizes for your gaming events



# Budget Proposal

## Average Pre-tax Cost for a Nintendo Wii:

\$359.78	Nintendo Wii Bundle
\$89.99	Guitar Hero
\$39.98	8 AA Rechargeable batteries with a recharger
\$9.99	Power Strip
\$7.99	Extension Cord
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\$507.73	Total Cost

## Example Wii Bundles

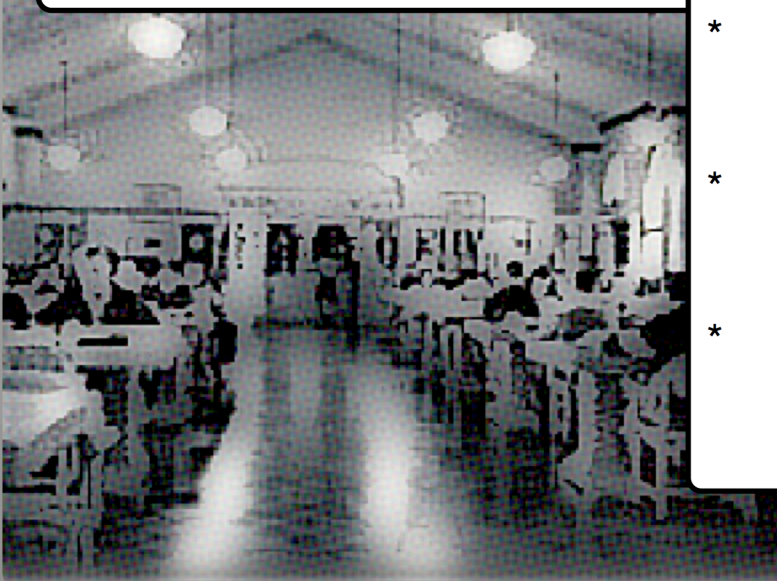
- \* Wii Bundle at Circuit City - \$421.78 for a console, 2 remotes, nunchuck, Mario Baseball, "Wii Play Game Bundle, Sports Bundle
- \* Bundle at Toys R Us - \$359.69 for a console, 2 remotes, 2 nunchucks, Super Smash Brothers, Sports Bundle

## Example Guitar Hero Bundles

- \* Aerosmith Guitar Bundle at Costco  
\$84.79 at Costco
- \* Guitar Hero III Bundle  
\$89.99 at Sears
- \* Rock Band Bundle  
Guitar, Drum, and Microphone Accessories  
\$159.99 at Costco

## And Check out these games!

- \* Cooking Mama Cook Off  
\$26.99 at Costco
- \* Wii Fit Bundle  
\$149.97 at Toys R Us
- \* 2 Player Mario Kart Bundle (game and steering wheels)  
\$159.99 at Costco



# Program Tips

For teen programs, allow the teens to run and organize events as much as possible.

**Talk to your audience** to find out what types of games and/or tournaments they would like to have, every community will be different.

Be prepared to play the games with the participants. Many players will want to **"challenge the librarian!"**

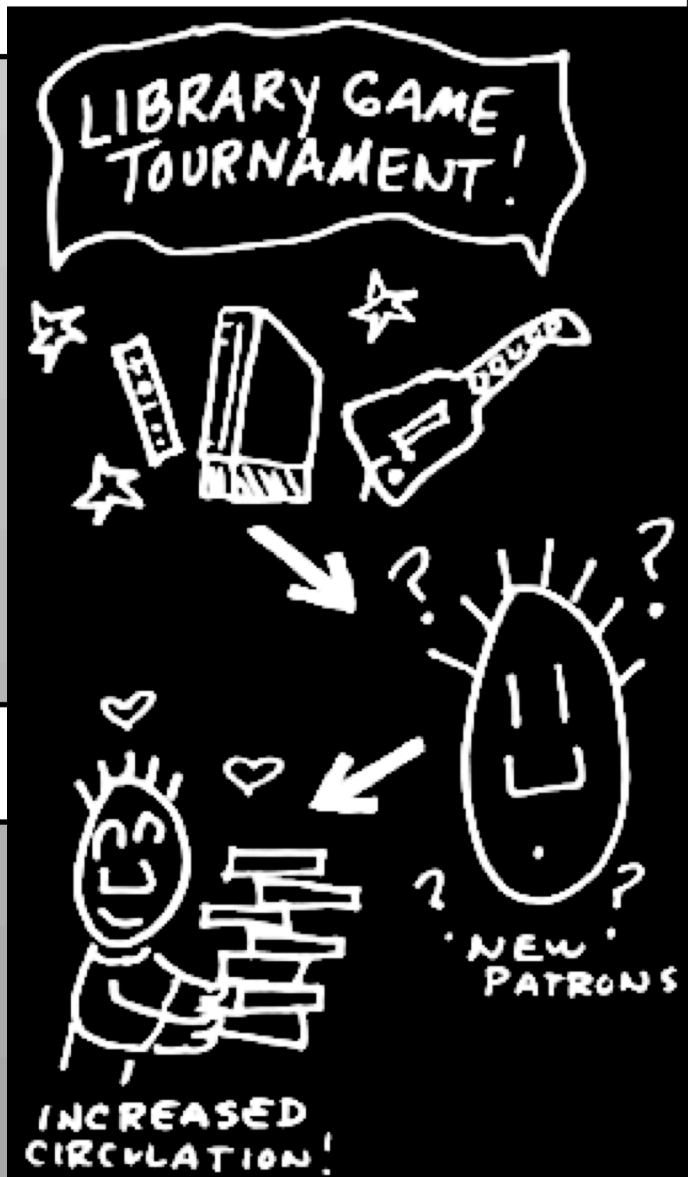
Have a **sign up list** to schedule gaming times.

Before your first event, **allow staff members to use the gaming system** to give them a chance to get comfortable with it and understand it.

Have books that relate to gaming, or **similar themes and titles to the games offered, displayed near the gaming areas**. For example, for a Guitar Hero tournament, for example, have books related to music available.

**Require a library card with no outstanding fines to participate** in tournaments...

\*The John C. Fremont Library District in Florence, CO had \$50 in fines paid off and signed up six new patrons before a recent tournament!



# Program Tips

Consider offering *pizza and/or snacks* (juice boxes, chips, cookies.)



For new events try to have one volunteer or staff member on hand for every 10 gaming participants. This will help you stay organized.

**Use projectors** instead of TVs – especially for tournaments – project the game onto a bare wall and turn off all of the lights.

Concerned about disturbing other patrons during gaming events?  
Consider offering events after hours.

**Plan ahead** - at your first gaming event, be prepared to tell them when your NEXT gaming event will be – they will ask!

Organize tournaments with the “**GT System**”, a free online tournament program developed by the Ann Arbor Library District in Michigan - <http://wiki.gtssystem.org/>

**Create a blog** for your gaming events so participants can communicate in between events...  
Arapahoe District Library (Arapahoe County, CO) has a blog for its gaming events: Get Your Game On @ ALD:  
<http://getyourgameonatald.blogspot.com/>  
This is also a feature of the "GT System."

# Program Tips

**Use your blog** to keep in touch about gaming events, post comments and rate "music videos" from Guitar Hero Tournaments, review new books and movies, and highlight other programs that might draw them into the library between gaming events.



If your gaming draws a large crowd, try breaking it into events **by age groups**. Have 11 to 13 year olds one night and 14 to 17 year olds another night.

If you designate a corner of the library as a "**Game Zone**," be prepared to have adults come in and ask to play. Make the patron borrow a circulating game to play in the "Game Zone."

Create a **Gaming Policy** to supplement your budget proposal.

**Promote your events** on a gaming blog, in local and school newspapers, in library bulletins, and on myspace. Post fliers around the library or at local schools.

Meeting rooms work well, but many libraries hold their gaming events in more public areas, which will **attract questions and the interest of others**.

Try different formats: play **game show games** like *Jeopardy!*, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, and *Hollywood Squares*.

# Gaming is more than just video games!

\*The Lavenia McCoy Public Library (Bayfield, CO) offers many computer games like "Rollercoaster Tycoon, Lemonade Tycoon, Pirates & Sim City for teens, kids, and toddlers, in addition to their video gaming programs.

\*Aurora Central Library (Aurora, CO) has a program called "Pizza and Games" which includes board games and activities like "Nerf-style basketball."

\*Arapahoe District Library (Arapahoe County, CO) offers many gaming programs in addition to their video gaming programs, such as *Scrabble*, *Jenga*, *Connect 4* and *Pokemon* or *Magic* card game events.



"I never have to remind them to share and in fact they offer their spots to anyone who hasn't played yet! Amazing how generous and respectful teens can be to one another when you loosen up and give them responsibility."

- Erwin Magbanua, Weingart City Heights Library, CA

"It can be difficult to find funding, so I would definitely recommend looking into gathering as much support as possible from local Friends groups, charities, businesses, and even the gaming corporations. Pasco County recently received a grant of three complete Wii systems, for example, from Nintendo of America and their PR firm, GolinHarris, based on a write-up and presentation on our gaming."

- Paul Stonebridge, Pasco County Library System, FL



# Get Creative!

- \* **Theme nights** - the Capital Area District Library in Michigan held a soccer gaming event while the 2006 World Cup was being held.
- \* Bring your **parent/grandparent nights** - have kids play with their parents and grandparents.
- \* **Try different consoles**, Wii, Xbox 360, and Play Station 3 gaming systems are very popular.
- \* Organize a **Seniors** Bowling or Golfing events.
- \* Help teens **create games** using GameMaker software.
- \* Have Nintendo Wii **Smash Brothers tournaments**.
- \* Start a monthly Dance Dance Revolution night for **Moms!**
- \* Hold **Home Run Derby** tournaments during the World Series and have the participants wear the jersey of their favorite players.
- \* While you have a captive audience, **surround them with library materials that may be of interest**, CDs, books, or music DVDs of performers with songs on Guitar Hero. Biographies and books about sports teams during sporting game tournaments.
- \* Have regular participants provide "**color commentary**" during gaming events.

# Online Gaming Resources

- \* Pasco County Library System, FL “**Gaming Events Policy**” - <http://pascolibraries.org/files/policies/GamingEvent.pdf>
- \* GT System - <http://wiki.gtsystem.org/>
- \* Arapahoe District Library Blog - <http://getyourgameonatald.blogspot.com/>
- \* ALA Gaming Resources - [http://gaming.ala.org/resources/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://gaming.ala.org/resources/index.php?title=Main_Page)
- \* Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki – Gaming - <http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Gaming>
- \* WebJunction Group: Gaming in the Library - <http://www.webjunction.org/688>
- \* Gaming the Way to Literacy” - <http://www.webjunction.org/688/articles/content/443418>

## **Blogs and Blog Postings:**

- \* Gaming in Libraries - <http://www.gamesinlibraries.org/>
- \* The Shifted Librarian Blog – Gaming entry – <http://theshiftedlibrarian.com/archives/2008/08/01/it-%e2%80%99s-a-way-your-two-favorite-thingscan-join-into-one.html>
- \* The Library Gamer - <http://librarygamer.wordpress.com/>
- \* Game Time With Mr. Raroo: 'Games In The Modern Public Library - [http://www.gamesetwatch.com/2008/05/game\\_time\\_with\\_mr\\_raroo\\_videogames\\_in.php](http://www.gamesetwatch.com/2008/05/game_time_with_mr_raroo_videogames_in.php)

# Selected Resources

## For Further Reading



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Educause Learning Initiative. (2008, July). 7 things you should know about Wii. Retrieved August 25, 2008, from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/EL17039.pdf>.

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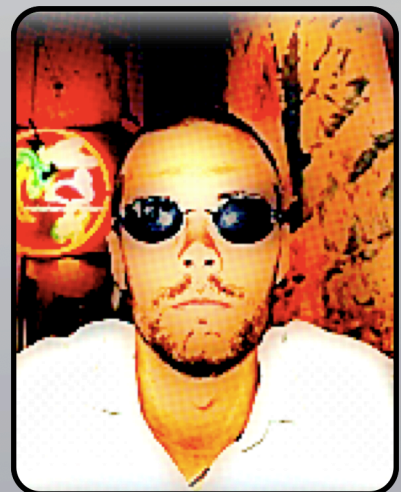
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**RESEARCH FELLOWS AT THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE**

[www.LRS.org](http://www.LRS.org)  
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[www.CDE.state.co.us](http://www.CDE.state.co.us)  
[www.DU.edu/education/programs/lis](http://www.DU.edu/education/programs/lis)

**SPECIAL THANKS: ILLUSTRATIONS ON PAGES 7,8, & 9 BY MR. RAROO OF [WWW.GAMESETWATCH.COM/2008/05/GAME\\_TIME\\_WITH\\_MR\\_RAROO\\_VIDEOGAMES\\_IN-PHP](http://WWW.GAMESETWATCH.COM/2008/05/GAME_TIME_WITH_MR_RAROO_VIDEOGAMES_IN-PHP)**

**Rated by V.R.C.**

## Game Ratings

# GA

**Appropriate for  
all audiences.**

**General Audiences**

Video Game Ratings:

- EC – Early Childhood – games suitable for ages 3 and older
- E – Everyone – games suitable for ages 6 and older
- E10+ - Everyone 10 and older – games suitable for ages 10 and older
- T – Teen – games suitable for ages 13 and older
- M – Mature – games suitable for ages 17 and older
- AO – Adults Only – games suitable for ages 18 and older