

Students help seniors stay fit with donation

May 14, 2009 - by Matthew Sitler

A unique and much appreciated gift from young to old took place Friday afternoon at Bracebridge Public school (BPS).

During a school assembly, students in Grade 7 and 8 presented a Wii to representatives of the Pines Long Term Care Home. The Wii will be used by residents for enjoyment and physical activity.

Made by Nintendo, Wii gaming consoles offer an interactive video gaming experience that allows users to become part of the games they play in ways ordinary video games don't.

Many people laud the console's ability to provide a physical activity component to video gaming — something that wasn't widely available until Wii hit the market.

Carole Oeffling, an activity aid at the Pines, said the new Wii will be used by residents on the main floor at the Pines in the Cedar, Oak and Spruce home areas.

Pines residents Ella Hammond and Blue Ouellet were on hand Friday afternoon at BPS for the Wii presentation.

"It's for fitness," said Oeffling. "There are bowling, golf and other games for residents to use with it."

Oeffling said the Pines already has a Wii, which is used by second floor residents.

"Even though you've only got this little remote in your hand, you still go through the motions of the exercise using it," she said. "One of the residents who uses it used to be a bowler. He scores just as well or better now using the Wii, so it works."

Grade 7 and 8 teacher at BPS Beth Ratcliffe said the donation was made in conjunction with an award-winning program her students recently took part in called Project Nobody.

"It's a character-building program where a package is delivered to your class and out comes a doll called 'Nobody.' The students' job is to undertake random acts of kindness to build character and make Nobody a somebody," she said. "Every student in the class had to take Nobody home. It's a little blue doll and they do anything from raising money for the OSPCA by walking dogs, to having a bake sale to donate money. Or it can be as simple as making your family dinner. Once you've done your task, you attach something to Nobody to represent what you've done. Each little thing that gets put on Nobody makes it a somebody."

Ratcliffe said the Wii was donated to the school by an anonymous donor.

At the end of the initiative, students had to tell their class what the idea behind Project Nobody was.

"We picked two winners and they chose where the Wii would be donated," said Ratcliffe.



The two winners, Grade 8 students Alex Webb and Emily Harris, chose the Pines as the donation recipient.

Webb said she chose the Pines because her grandfather Mel Webb stayed there. Harris agreed the donation to the home was a great idea.

Teacher Robin Allison was also involved in the Project Nobody initiative.

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