

Lifestyles

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Anne Putnam, of Orchard Park, sits in front of the board game she developed and marketed herself, The Family Vacation Game.

Photo by John Normile



It's all in the way you play the game

Orchard Park native develops family game

by KEATON T. DEPRIEST
Reporter

Don't spend your time going broke in Monopoly. Forget about playing Life with your family because driving a pink station wagon just isn't fun.

The Family Vacation Game might be a better way to spend an evening with relatives.

Developed by Orchard Park resident Anne Putnam, the game recently made it to the shelves of Western New York stores.

"I view it as an educational tool for families," she said. "It is about how budgets affect family spending, and it enlightens children about expenses."

Putnam, a graduate of Lancaster High School, said she created the game because she was looking for a way to unite families in an organized manner.

"A strong family unit promotes self-esteem, security and self-confidence. There is no greater feeling than that," she said.

She felt that there were few families that spent quality time together, either because parents do not have enough time or because of a difficulty in planning family activities.

"My project was to create

a game that promotes cooperative family interaction," Putnam said in a prepared statement. "I did not want this game to be like most which encourage and rely on a highly developed sense of competition."

Before the game was produced, Putnam created her own trademarked company, The Family Connection, which has grown with the creation of the board game as well as other ideas, such as puzzles and place mats yet to come.

"The Family Connection is a company committed to helping families grow together as a unit," she said.

In the game, families work together to plan and achieve their dream vacation, which teaches budgeting and the impact of financial choices.

The Family Vacation Game can be played by up to eight people, age 5 and older.

Using a sample game, she hired a family to give the game a trial run to make sure there were no discrepancies before it was manufactured.



The Family Vacation game blends fun and learning to build a dream vacation.

Following the manufacturing of 3000 editions of the game, she took it upon herself to market it to dozens of Western New York retailers. "Every retailer I presented the game to, whether they decided to carry it or not, really liked the concept be-

hind the game and its presentation," Putnam said. This month, a review of her game will be featured in Edplay, a bimonthly magazine dedicated to showcasing commodities and reviewing products, such as books. The magazine is sold in

Library hosting program on Iroquois Indians

The Orchard Park Public Library will host a program at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24 dedicated to the history of the Iroquois Indians. Marvin Curry will host the program, which will discuss the history, culture and traditions and provide artifacts for viewing. The event is free to the community. The library is located at 4570 South Buffalo St.

the stores of many retailers, which Putnam said will help create awareness of her product.

"Edplay reaches retailers, and that is the key," she said.

Putnam added that she will continue to create products within her self-ownership to promote family unity.

"Everything we do is geared toward keeping families together," she said.

The Family Vacation Game is sold for \$24.99 and may be found at the following Western New York retailers:

- Vidler's 5 & 10, 676 Main St., East Aurora.
- Puddle Duck Toys & Dolls, 5225 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville.
- ESP Salons and Spa, Inc., 5250 Genesee St., Bowmansville.
- Noah's Ark Workshop, 329, Vistula Ave., Orchard Park.
- Gymboree Play and Music, 8012A Transit Road, Williamsville.

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