

# Nevada Association for Play Therapy



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## President's Message

Becky Rudd, MA, MFT-I, CADC-I

The Nevada Association for Play Therapy is excited about the upcoming year. We have a number of wonderful presentations available including our annual conference with Dr. Garry Landreth this April. One of our goals as a chartered branch of The Association for Play Therapy is to increase membership in the state of Nevada and build

a community of people who are dedicated to the treatment of children through play therapy. We have expanded NVAPT to Las Vegas this year and will begin providing continuing education workshops this November with Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson.

We would love to welcome our new members to NVAPT and encourage anyone interested in play therapy to join. Funds we receive from Nevada membership dues are put directly back into our local community

events. We use membership dues to sponsor continuing education (CEU) workshops quarterly, bringing well-known presenters to the area for our annual conference, and inform the public of the value of play therapy and play therapy providers. As our membership base grows we hope to provide longer workshops and more CEU options as well as increase the length of our conference and number of presenters.

We want to thank you for your interest and participation in NVAPT and look forward to seeing you at our next CEU Workshop.



## APT Conference: Hollywood CA By Becky Rudd, MA, MFT-I, CADC-I

What better place to gather a bunch of play therapists than downtown Hollywood! The Association for Play Therapy put on a wonderful event that included everything from a week full of play-related seminars to sightseeing tours and more toy and book vendors than one can imagine. One of the trainings that stands out the most is Dr. Gisela Schubach De Domenico's Sandtray-Worldplay. The room was filled with Dr. Domenico's miniature collection along with 100 sandtrays. Participants were asked to bring an assortment of 20 miniatures to be shared with a group of eight people. We had the opportunity to both understand the sandtray-worldplay method from a logistics point of view, but we were also encouraged to experience the process of Sandtray-worldplay as well. It was truly an experi-

ence to have learned this information from such a well-known Sandtray therapist. Dr. De Domenico offers sandtray worldplay workshops out of her Oakland California office. Her website is <http://vision-quest.us>



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### Get ready Las Vegas!!!

In 2009 the NVAPT Annual Conference is coming to play in Vegas.



### Call for Submissions:

Article, networking items, book reviews, comments to the editor about previous article/issues are all welcome. For more information on submitting an article, please contact Laure'l Santos at [l1212s@earthlink.net](mailto:l1212s@earthlink.net)

## Play Therapy Experience By Lois Erquiaga

As an intern I was apprehensive about conducting effective play therapy sessions with my young clients. I have only had minimal experience to practice the training skills I was taught or read about. At the first play therapy training I attended, Dr. Schaffer expounded on the moral obligations to provide evidence based play therapy. I grasp the importance of his teaching. I want to be effective, however it is difficult to quantify results when you are not working in a controlled environment.

My five year old client arrived for her play therapy appointment. It was noted right at the start that her behaviors were not typical. Her usual aggressiveness and boisterous play had changed to quiet determination. She did not explain anything to me, she made a simple request for me to sit on the floor. She pulled out a pile of dinosaurs, providing family roles for each. She explained that the smallest was a 5 year old girl who was dying. The mother dinosaur could do nothing to save her life. She described how all of the little girl's blood was draining out and then the small dinosaur stopped breathing. She built a coffin out of plastic cups insuring that the lid stayed closed. (The coffin lid she chose had a number 5 imprinted on the bottom.) She arranged the family and friends of the little girl around the cups and began speaking in quiet tones. Therapist and child whispered about the

sadness and tears from the witnesses. She said the 16 year old brother was really crying because he lost his little sister (she has a 16 year old brother). The client sat in silence for a few moments. She then announced that she was done. She stood up and was ready to go see her mother in the waiting area. Her countenance had changed. She was smiling and skipping down the hallway toward her mother.

Without the client present, I asked the young girl's mother if there had been a death in the family recently. She stated that a family friend had died, an older gentleman. Mother had taken her daughter to the funeral. The client appeared to be thinking about her own mortality. Thinking about the possible interpretations or conjecture about what really happened for the young client is difficult at best and impossible to expound upon with empirical data. The client's behavior was less angry and more serene the remainder of the week. She is functioning better and I believe her play had a role in her improvement. There are numerous journal articles available today, which provide evidence in regard to the effectiveness of play therapy. If I, as an intern, practice in a way that reflects this knowledge, there must be some assurance that I am effective with the little people placed in my care in light of no scientific proof.



Violet Oaklander (1988, p. 324) provides assurance

Children are our finest teachers. They already know how to grow, how to develop, how to learn, how to expand and discover, how to feel, laugh and cry and get mad, what is right for them and what is not right for them, what they need. They already know how to love and be joyful and to live life to its fullest, to work and to be strong and full of energy. All they (and the children within us) need is the space to do it.

### Reference

Oaklander, V. (1988). *Windows to Our Children*. Highland, NY: The Gestalt Journal Press.

## Member Spotlight: Bill Harvey LCSW By Elizabeth Dear, MFT

Bill Harvey, LCSW, is a Mental Health Counselor II, at Northern Nevada Child and Adolescent Services (NNCAS, formerly Children's Behavioral Services), where he has been working almost 3 years. He initially became interested in play therapy because of "wanting to be playful myself." From playing with his second cousins, he recognized early that play was the "language of kids," and he could talk better to children when they were playing.

By high school, he knew he was interested in working with children in a therapeutic environment and would need to learn to play himself and to pursue studies that trained him in psychotherapy. He chose social work because "it was the

most equitable and offered the widest array of jobs I could take." He was interested in working with children because of a "difficult family background and wanting to help make healthy, happy kids."

After earning his bachelors and masters in social work, he started working with children in Fallon, Nevada, investigating abuse for the child protective services agency. In 1999, he began working toward becoming a Registered Play Therapist, doing some of his hours at Family Counseling Services, and became Nevada's first male and second therapist overall to earn this title in 2001. He helped start up the Nevada chapter of the Association for Play Therapy in coordination with Barbara Prupas and Jennifer

Pettipiece in 2001 and rejoined the Board as Vice President in 2006. In the future,

Bill said he would like to work at St. Jude's Children's Hospital, a hospital for children with cancer and other severe illnesses. His interests outside of his work is an interest in rescuing dogs and other animals and in Jeeps and four-wheeling. He has offered to share his experience and advice for those who are interested in becoming Registered Play Therapists. He can be reached at 688-1600 at NNCAS.

## Membership Spotlight: Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson

### By: Sherry Sanders M.Ed, MA, MFT

Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, recently an Associate Professor for Counselor Education at Oregon State University (OSU), has just arrived at UNLV. She was hired to start the new PhD program in the Counselor Education Program. 'Dr. Dale' is a committed play therapist. She started using play therapy in her MS program at Idaho State more than 20 years ago - because it worked! The "talk therapies" she was taught were much less effective. She touts great plans in Vegas. Dr. Dale has started clinical Play Therapy Training Centers at Idaho State, Sam Houston State and Oregon State University. And yes, she plans to do the same at UNLV!

Dr. Dale earned both her masters and doctorate in counseling at Idaho State and holds a graduate degree in curriculum instruction. Dr. Dale was so excited about the use of "play" in clinical work with children that she wrote her dissertation about play therapy,

developing a new clinical model for therapeutic application. Dr. Dale expanded her initial approach of Client Centered Play Therapy to include Adlerian and Cognitive Behavioral perspectives as well as bibliotherapy. She uses multiple aspects of storytelling as therapeutic interventions in her clinical and educational practice. Her clinical and current research interests include investigating the universality of storytelling and diverse symbolic representations. Dr. Dale holds the advanced clinical licensure for a private practice professional counselor (Idaho) and is nationally certified (NBCC) with specialization in supervision and distance counseling. Further, she is a Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor through APT. Dr. Dale currently serves as clinical editor for Play Therapy Magazine, an international publication of the Association for Play Therapy which serves clinicians globally. She has extensive experience working with

children and families as a professional counselor and registered professional nurse.

Dr. Dale loves teaching, writing, researching, reading, hiking, biking, making art and playing. She believes that the ultimate answers for good clinical work with children come from the children themselves. "I will always have my 'hands' in some sort of direct clinical work. That is what keeps me in touch and also makes me a good teacher."

Further vita information:

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Immediate Past President for WACES  
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## Why I Became A Play Therapist

### By Annie P. Perkins, LSCW, RPT

I started out late in life. The things most people do in their 20's and 30's, I started in my 50's. The Island of Oahu in Hawaii was the site of my first professional job after graduation, in a sex abuse treatment program. Being a recent graduate of UNR, in 1994 I'd never heard of Play Therapy. When I was interviewed by my new prospective supervisor, I asked her if she had a kitty, due to the sand tray in her office. She was quick to tell me, "No, we do play therapy with children here." Being an adult, I thought I'd only be able to understand adults enough to provide any kind of psychotherapy with them, but not children. I'd leave child therapy to those who were specially trained.

My supervisor introduced me to play therapy. She told me to "notice" a lot of things as children played. "Oh, I notice you're playing with the truck now." "Now I see you are having the little guy hit the big guy." I sat in on a few sessions with her and then she directed me to go to some yard sales

and pick up some toys.

I feel like I was very fortunate to start play therapy in Hawaii at that particular time, as there were some very highly trained and motivated folks there who were starting the Hawaii Chapter of APT, and beginning to offer various

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*"the most important thing I learned from all this was that there is a medium where I can be effective in guiding children"*

play therapy trainings. In the beginning I didn't think I'd ever be able to complete all the requirements to qualify as a Registered Play Therapist but I continued to work on it a little at a time until that day finally arrived.

Since that first day when I thought the sand tray was a sand box for a kitty,

I've learned so much from some very wonderful people; professional trainers and everyday practitioners, but especially from the children. One of my best memories is the 5 year old girl, after repeatedly rescuing her from the mean old snake, rescuing her from climbing the shelves in the room and telling her I didn't want her to hurt herself and I would protect her and I cared about her, having her look up at me and say "I know that, I learned it when you threw the snake in the garbage can." Probably the most important thing I learned from all of this was that there is a medium where I can be effective in guiding children to work out their problems. And, there are wonderful people available who are willing and excited about sharing their wisdom and experience to help others who also want to become more proficient for the sake of the children.

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## Membership

It's fast and easy to join the NVAPT. Dual membership in the Association for Play Therapy (national) and the Nevada Association for Play Therapy (state) is required. Individuals can join the organizations either as a professional or as an affiliate. APT members receive a quarterly newsletter that contains clinical articles and a semi-annual journal that presents research and case studies. Professional insurance options, distance learning opportunities, and a free annual membership directory are among the many additional benefits offered to APT members. Nevada branch members also receive NVAPT newsletters or e-newsletters containing information specifically related to play therapy in Nevada, such as meetings and conferences. To join, go to: [www.nvapt.org/membership.htm](http://www.nvapt.org/membership.htm).

### Current NVAPT Membership

Professional Members: 27  
RPT/S: 4  
New or renewing members last quarter: 2

## NVAPT 2007/2008 Board Members

<b>President:</b> Becky Rudd, MA, MFT-I, CADC-I	be_ducky@yahoo.com
<b>Vice President:</b> Bill Harvey, MSW, LSCW	goldy7070@yahoo.com
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<b>Newsletter &amp; Website:</b> Laurel Santos, MA, NCC, CP	11212s@earthlink.net

## NVAPT 2007/2008 Calendar

### Reno

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#### November 14th 2007

Play therapy with children who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders  
Presented by  
Jackie Hurt, MA, MFT-I, CADC-I

#### December 7, 2007

Play Therapy Holiday Gathering

#### January 9, 2008

Play Therapy  
Presented by  
Tom Panian MA, NCC

#### March 12, 2008

Legal Issues in Play Therapy

\*Check our website for location

### Las Vegas

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#### November 16th 2007

The Do's and Don'ts of Bibliotherapy in Play Therapy: Competency guidelines and resources for practitioners  
Presented by  
Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson CLPC-S, NCC, ACS, RPT-S RN

#### January 11, 2008

Play Therapy from a Sequences Meta-framework Perspective  
Presented by  
Dr. Katherine Hertlein, PhD, MFT

#### March TBA, 2008

Play Therapy  
Presenter  
Dr. Shannon Smith

\*Check our website for location

### 6th Annual Conference Reno Nevada

#### April 25 & 26, 2008

Healing the Hurting Child: The Necessary Dimensions of Child Centered Play Therapy

**Presented by  
Dr. Garry Landreth**

Pre-registration begins  
November 20, 2007

Visit our website at  
[www.nvapt.org](http://www.nvapt.org)  
to register online