

# Draughts

by Lynne Belluscio

This week, a group of kids are spending Wednesday afternoon on the back porch of LeRoy House. They will be making a couple of wooden toys including a checker board. In a day of electronic games and PokemonGo, the game of checkers might seem pretty tame, but if the electricity goes off, and there is no way to charge the cell phone, it might be a good idea to have a checkerboard.

A checkerboard has a grid of eight squares in each direction with alternating colors. Chess can also be played on a checkerboard. In England, checkers is called draughts. Although most of us know how to play checkers, there are many other games that can be played on a checkerboard in addition to chess.

**Checkers** is played on the black squares and each player gets 12 pieces.

1. Move only one space at a time, and always move diagonally.
2. Move only forward.
3. You can jump only if an opponent's piece is diagonally adjacent and there must be an empty square to land into.
4. When you jump an opponent's piece, you capture it and remove it from the board.
5. You must jump and you must jump all the pieces available on that turn.
6. The object is to move your pieces to the back line of your op-

ponent's side and then it becomes a "King," by putting a second piece on top or by turning it over.

7. Kings can move in any direction diagonally, backward or forward.

The object is to jump all of your opponent's pieces and capture them or corner their pieces so they can't make any moves.

**French Checkers** is played on the black squares and each player gets 12 pieces and are set on the checkerboard the same as traditional checkers.

1. Move only one space at a time, and always move diagonally.
2. Move only forward.
3. To jump an opponent's piece, you can only move backward – not forward.
4. Kings may move in any direction.

The object is to have the most number of kings.

**Diagonal Checkers** is played on the board turned ¼ turn and each player receives 12 pieces. It is played on the black squares, with 2 in the back row, 4 in the middle row and six in the front row.

1. Move only one space at a time, and only diagonally forward.
2. When your piece reaches either of the two places at the opposite side, they became kings.
3. Kings move or jump in any direction.

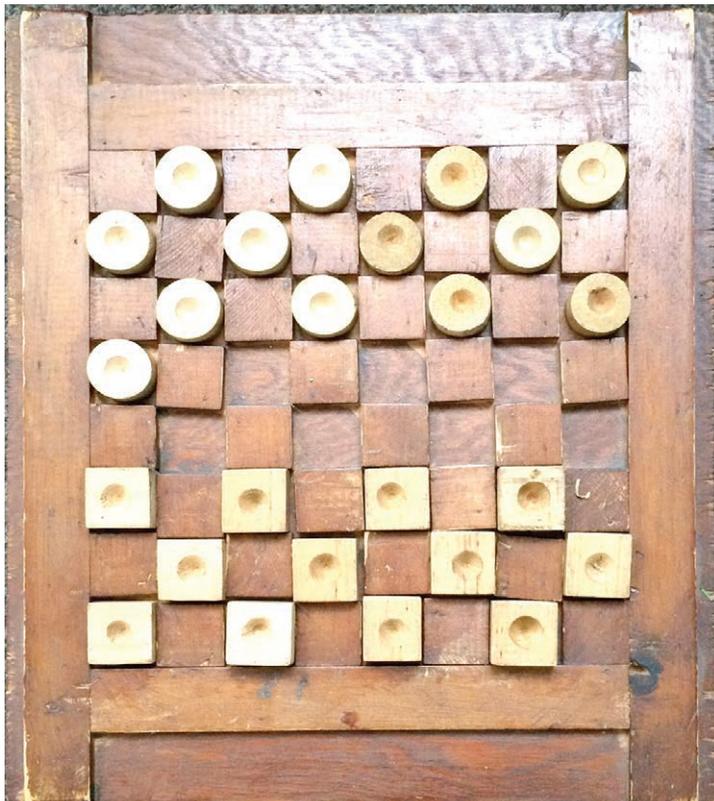
The object is to capture all of your opponent's pieces.



Checkerboard made of inlaid wood.



Checkerboard painted on old breadboard.



Checkerboard made by Wilfred Vasile.

**Giveaway Checkers** is played like regular checkers, except the object is to lose all of your pieces, so plan to move your pieces directly in the way of your opponent's pieces, so your pieces have to be jumped -- the more pieces jumped by your opponent, the better.

Checkers has been played for centuries. A variety of checkers was played by the ancient Egyptians, over 1600 years before Christ (BC).

Probably the most unusual checkers board that we have in our collection is a board made by Wilfred Vasile while he was a student at the School for the Blind in Batavia. Imagine playing checkers when you cannot see the board or

the pieces on the board!! The board squares are different heights, so if you run your fingers over the board you can feel the black and white squares.

The round pieces rest in the recessed squares, but obviously, you have to create an image in your mind of where all the pieces are so you know where to move and how to jump your opponent's pieces. When you reach the opposite side to be kinged, you turn over your piece and expose a recessed hole on the piece. The kings can be felt with the fingers. We will bring out Wilfred's checkerboard for everyone to try and see if anyone can play a game blindfolded.