



UNITY Youth Leaders lead powerful discussion on Youth Substance Abuse

On a beautiful May morning in North Adams, passersby of the First Baptist Church on Eagle Street could hear “boom chica boom” repeatedly chanted from inside the community room. A humorous sound to those unaware, the phrase served as the premise to energize the group of fifty-six participants who gathered for our Coalition’s monthly forum. Members of UNITY’s Youth Leadership Program led the forum, entitled “Teens Take on Tough Topic: Youth Substance Abuse.” Ben Shiner, who has just completed his junior year at Mt. Greylock Regional High School, led the group through this ‘repeat after me’ exercise in attempts to break the conversational barriers between the teens and adults. His energy proved to be just the ticket to entering what evolved into a moving, important, reality striking discussion.



UNITY Youth Leaders Gina Riggins, Kate Barbeau, Britney Shepard, Lauren Marceau and Ben Shiner stand with advisors Alison Basdekis, far left, and Kate Merrigan, far right

The group engaged in great dialogue, evenly participated in by the youth leaders and adults. At the mid-way point, Lauren Marceau and Ben Shiner of the Youth Leadership Program performed role-playing monologues in which they depicted realistic teen characters. They scripted stories they have heard from friends at school, and developed them into recounts of a star athlete’s anxieties on game day and a young woman’s prom day preparation. Other Youth Leadership Program members, Britney Shepard and Kate Barbeau, gave feedback to these monologues along with staff members from the Brien Center. They spoke loosely about the availability of illegal substances, and of the susceptibility of teens to use when they are stressed, frustrated, sad, or simply bored.

Youth outside of UNITY’s Youth Leadership Program membership list also came to participate in this conversation. These students echoed the adage we so often hear that “there’s nothing to do,” so teens drink and engage in risky behaviors to escape boredom. Our Coalition Intern from MCLA, Jessica Dennis, spoke eloquently about the social responsibility of young adults to act as role models for their teen peers who look up to them. The stigma of re-paying a favor by purchasing alcohol or other illegal substances for younger siblings and friends has been long overstated, and should instead be dismissed as inaccurate.

District Attorney David Capeless, when asked to share his thoughts on the issue of youth substance abuse, offered a quote from Will Rogers. Rogers, a famous cowboy, broadcaster, and philosopher, once said, “it isn’t what’s so that people don’t know...it’s what they do know that ain’t so!” There is much to be taken from these simple words; Capeless elaborated to say that we have to change the perception that “teens will do it anyway, so why bother...the bottom line is it’s unhealthy, unsafe, and it’s illegal.”

Participants of the May forum came away with an enlightened reality check of what young adults encounter in our society every day. Mixed messages around the dangers and illegality of substances are used so readily in the media, but also from adults our youth look up to for guidance. The consensus from the audience was that to combat these messages, this conversation should be on-going, and should continue to involve interaction between our area youth, teens, and adults.

--Jenna Cece

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NEXT COALITION MEETING:

Emerging Issues in our Community: Setting our agenda for the year ahead

Friday
September 12
10:00 a.m. to noon
First Baptist Church
North Adams
Eagle Street entrance

COALITION NEWS

Improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.

Our Mission

“Dedicated to improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.”

In pursuit of this mission, we place particular emphasis on the following:

- Strengthening neighborhoods and community life
- Preventing alcohol and substance abuse
- Fostering economic development
- Mitigating poverty
- Supporting positive youth development
- Building bridges between residents and service agencies

Coalition Supporters

Public Sources

- MA Department of Social Services
- MA Cultural Council
- US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- MA Department of Public Health
- MA Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

Foundation Supporters

- Fund for North Adams
- Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Local Support

- North Adams Human Services
- Contributions from our many individual supporters

The Coalition is a member agency of the **Northern Berkshire United Way** and the **Williamstown Community Chest**.

To submit announcements to the *Coalition News*:

The *Coalition News* is a publication of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. We encourage submissions of announcements from local organizations.

September Newsletter Deadline

August 20, 2008

Please submit announcements (100 words in paragraph form) via e-mail to: jcece@nbccoalition.org or abashevkin@nbccoalition.org. If necessary, announcements may also be faxed to **413-663-9877**. Thank you!

The Coalition has moved into a new home

As most of you know, the coalition finally made the move to our new space at 61 Main Street (2nd floor, suite 218) on June 16 and 17. The move, while being tough, was accomplished by the staff pulling together, help from volunteers like Bev Goodell in the office and Herb Wilkinson who supplied boxes, special help from teens Nate Trong and Damien Peters, and finally the brawn of our crew from Connors Brothers Moving company. They were able to move Kathy Keeser’s big blue desk, which they said was the heaviest desk they have ever moved, and place it around 400 pounds! Other obstacles we gave the movers included a cactus and hanging spider plants for Carolyn’s office, conference room tables which we then had them move back, and the frustration of having us in their way for two days. There was lots to do in getting ready to actually make the move, but now we are in our fresh, clean and bright new space. We are still working on unpacking boxes, as shelves are still being completed, but for the most part we are settling in. Come see us soon in our new space!

--Kathy Keeser

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

6-8 p.m. @ The Masonic Temple, North Adams

Community & Police...fighting together against crime!

Youth Collaborative Wraps Year on Celebratory Note

This year, the Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative kicked off our monthly meetings by generating a list of topics that members were interested in covering through brief trainings, presentations, and discussions. Through the year, we covered things like Applied Behavior Analysis, the presence of alcohol in the lives of youth workers, arts offerings for young people in our community, and after/out-of-school opportunities for middle school youth. At our June meeting, we looked back on the year of the group and on our individual years at our organizations and shared success stories with each other.

The next NBYC meeting will be on **Wednesday, September 10**, from **11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** at the nbCC offices. A light lunch will be served. This meeting is open to anyone who is interested in networking with others who work with young people. For more information, please email Kate Merrigan at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org.

--Kate Merrigan

Improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.

nbCC Board of Directors has elected new members

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition Board of Directors held its annual meeting and election of new board members and officers on Thursday, June 19. President Deb Rosselli presided over the meeting. The following board members were re-elected to three year terms: Al Nelson, Jonathan Secor, Chris Meehan, Maggie Bittman, and Paul Hutchinson. New Board members (and their term of office) elected include: Enid Shields (2011), Robert Calway (2010), and Joe Nowak (2010).

New officers elected include Rabbi Jeffrey W. Goldwasser, who as Vice President will become the new President of the Coalition Board in July of 2009; Steve Green was elected Clerk, and Maggie Bittman and Scott Nichols were elected as at-large members of the Coalition Executive Committee.

The nbCC Board of Directors meets monthly from September through June and helps to oversee the Coalition's status as a public charity as well as helping to make policy decisions for the organization.

--Al Bashevkin

Teen Pregnancy Prevention luncheon raises awareness

On May 16, twenty-five local service providers attended a local forum on teen pregnancy prevention held at the North Adams Public Library. It's a difficult issue to figure out, but this community conversation was a good start. What follows are ideas from the community discussion:

- Teens listen to each other best. Programs like MELD are examples of how this works. As part of our repertoire in preventing teen pregnancy, let's think peer leadership / training, and about how we are going to get peers to talk to each other about the issues surrounding teen pregnancy and its prevention.
- Arts is an effective way to engage middle school youth in after school or out of school programming.
- Because of the demand for youth workers from 3-9 PM, perhaps we should think about training a 2nd shift of youth workers. It's difficult for those teaching or working regular jobs to continue this work during the "2nd shift." Is there an untapped resource we should consider?
- It was great to hear that Girls' Inc. is getting federal money to do programming throughout the County (including North County) for out of school time.
- One-time events are helpful, but not the answer for engaging youth and their families. We need to consider how we can build longer relationships, seek out and honor the exceptional adults who maintain positive loving relationships with our youth.
- How can we better engage the young people that are out of reach? What about a longitudinal study of young people engaged in middle school activities and what happens to them afterwards? What can we learn from this that can impact the programs we offer? Is this something that the Donahue Institute (who is leading the Compassionate MA effort) can help with?
 - Let's learn about social networking sites that young people use like *myspace*.
 - We need to do a better job at helping boys understand their shared responsibilities in creating new families.

For more information about Northern Berkshire efforts to prevent teen pregnancy, contact Kate or Al at the Coalition office.

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition Board of Directors

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

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Service-Learning Coordinator
North Adams Public Schools

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ENID SHIELDS
Community Resident

MARY SUGDEN
Substance Abuse Therapist, Brien Center

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20 Bank Row, Room 202
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Take Charge: The North Adams Campaign to Save Energy

High energy prices are here, and there's nothing we can do to lower them from our corner of Massachusetts. But we can use a lot less, and stimulate our local economy as well! Such is the sentiment behind the Coalition's newest endeavor, tentatively called Take Charge: The North Adams Campaign to Save Energy. If successful, we hope similar campaigns can be adopted in all towns in the Northern Berkshires.

High energy prices are an economic issue and a justice issue. Poorer families who rent their homes have less control over investing in their building, which makes them more at the whim of fluctuating prices. In addition, the demand for energy efficiency and retro-fits is already stimulating our local building trades and has the potential to do a lot more. If high energy prices continue, and we should assume they will, more local businesses will find they have an important role to play, and more of our young people will be drawn to exciting jobs rebuilding our old, inefficient towns.

Following up from the April Coalition meeting, which focused on energy and environmental issues in the area, the Center for Ecological Technology's Nancy Nylen and Al Bashevkin talked about what steps to take. I was hired and a community group was formed to begin taking action. During our three meetings in May and June, we have developed a 5 step campaign to reduce energy use in homes. The 5 steps are simple, but can add up to significant savings. The 5 check boxes correspond to specific areas of savings, and the information inside the brochure details how much savings can be achieved, how to get started, and where to go for more help.

The Take Charge campaign will launch in middle to late August, distributing brochures and energy-efficient light bulbs, holding information sessions, producing how-to video segments and empowering the community to take control of its energy needs. We hope to have MCLA, Williams, Drury and McCann students adding their ideas and energy to this effort, and we hope to have you talking to your neighbors about the campaign.

--Morgan Goodwin

Safe Homes of North Berkshire Resource Guides are in!

The Coalition publishes an annual guide listing parent members of the Safe Homes Network in North County. Parents have taken the Pledge:

- **I (we) will not allow teen parties in my home or on my property when I am not present.**
- **I (we) will not allow the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs by teens in my home or on my property.**

The Resource Guide also contains information on the following topics: Massachusetts laws on furnishing alcohol to minors, using a fake I. D. to purchase alcohol, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs/refusing a breathalyzer test; support groups for families dealing with alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use; a list of the Safe Homes Advisory Committee; and 80 Substance-Free Ways Teenagers Can Have Fun!

If you have a child in grades 6-12 and would like to learn more about Safe Homes or if your organization would like to make our Resource Guide available to others, please contact **Lois Daunis** at the Coalition for more information: **663-7588** or **ldaunis@nbccoalition.org**.

--Lois Daunis

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The Coalition welcomes Summer interns

Morgan Goodwin graduated from Williams College on June 1st and started working for the Coalition on June 3rd. He came to know the Coalition through the April forum where he helped bring the topic of the energy crisis and its solutions to the community. At school, Morgan was the leader of Thursday Night Group, the student climate action group, and co-president of the student body. Originally from Keene, New York, he is familiar with small towns in the mountains, but that didn't stop him from spending two summers in China and majoring in Chinese. In describing his new job at the Coalition, Morgan says, "This is a fun place to work and I'm doing what I love to do. The people are great, a little crazy, but really great!" Morgan is working on the TAKE CHARGE campaign to save residents money on energy bills through the newly formed North Adams Green Group.

Asheque Shams is a Political Economy major from Williams College, entering his Junior year. He will be spending the upcoming academic year as a visiting student at Oxford University in the UK. Asheque heard about the nbCC from the Williams Office of Career Counseling (OCC) and he is working with us on an Alumni Sponsored Grant. He plans to submit a report to Williams College OCC about his experience at the Coalition in September. At the Coalition, Asheque is responsible for organizing "National Night Out," a drug and crime prevention awareness event. At Williams, Asheque plays squash and is involved in various community service projects. In his spare time, he enjoys biking, sailing, and reading.

DSS hosts Youth Recognition Dinner

The 2008 DSS Youth Recognition Dinner for the Western Region was held on Wednesday, June 18 at the Yankee Pedlar Inn in Holyoke, MA. I had the privilege of attending with my mother, an area program manager for DSS in the Pittsfield office. On a rainy evening, 68 young graduates gathered with their foster families, social workers, friends, and other supporters to celebrate their achievements. Over 120 adolescents in foster care in Western Massachusetts had received their GED, high school diploma, or college degree during the past year. Students were recognized by the Directors of their respective DSS area offices, and all students were given a chance to express their gratitude in front of the group. Two youth speakers, now both college graduates, addressed the audience to convey their positive experiences with involvement in DSS. The Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, Angelo McLain, was able to attend to share some words of inspiration with the young graduates, along with Regional Director, Paul Fitzsimons.



Christine Nutt, right, with her foster mother, Diane Bleau

Several students from North County attended this recognition event, and received awards for graduating from high school this year. Ashley Scott, a graduate of McCann Technical High School, has made plans to pursue Criminal Justice at BCC in the Fall, followed by hopes to transfer to Westfield State College. Graduates of Drury High School include Zach Babeu, Brandon Hurst, Kristen Gancarz, and Christine Nutt. Zach, Brandon, and Kristen plan to attend BCC this Fall, while Christine has been accepted to the Medical Assistantship Program at McCann. Involved with DSS for many years, Christine became pregnant with her son Jordan, now almost two years old, at the age of sixteen. Christine entertained the idea of dropping out of school, overwhelmed by the thought of maintaining academics while raising her son, but her foster mother refused this option. Diane Bleau, Christine's foster mom and close confidante, explained to me that although Christine has traveled a difficult road to where she is today, she is strong-willed and has received great support through DSS in finishing high school.



Kristen Gancarz stands proudly with her foster parents before accepting her award

All students were appreciative of their awards, many hugged their Area Directors, and some formed tears of genuine self-pride for their accomplishments. The evening provided an overall sense of joy and relief for the students, their families and supporters, and those employed by DSS who have worked with them.

--Jenna Cece

Teen Writing Workshop: Somewhere Between Awesome and Amazing

On June 18, sixteen members of UNITY's Teen Writing Workshop presented their work to family and friends at our annual year-end reading/book release. In her introduction of the readers, workshop facilitator Robin Lehlleitner brought attention to the range of workshop experience represented by the writers who were onstage for the presentation. At the event, we were lucky to have participants who had been with us just a few months and others who had been involved for four or five years. Topics of the pieces shared covered the loss of friends, conflicting feelings about being from a small town, breaking away from an abusive relationship, the internet as a new social frontier, and many other themes—funny, dark, darkly funny—that are pertinent to the lives of young people.

This year's issue of *Somewhere Between: A Journal of Teenage Writing*, which was premiered at the reading, is our biggest yet, coming in at 170 pages with the work of 19 young people featured. This issue also stands out in that it features a new style of front cover; based on ideas that emerged during a workshop session in May, the cover design is bold red and contains one pull quote from the work of each author featured inside. Copies of the journal are available at the nbCC offices or by calling **Kate Merrigan** at **663-7588**. Many congratulations to the teen writers for their exciting new book and continual interest in taking artistic risks!

--Kate Merrigan



L: New workshop member Chelsey makes her debut reading in front of our audience



R: Workshop veteran Ben debuts his new look (a hat strung with UNITY shoelaces) to the amusement of fellow writer Shelly

Groove Planning a Rockin' August

Members of the Groove planning committee are busy planning two great shows that fans can look forward to attending later in the summer. First up, we'll host three bands at MASS MoCA on August 8, from 7-10 p.m. A little later, we'll have an afternoon, festival-style show at Heritage State Park in North Adams on August 18 (time TBD). Bands are still being confirmed, but information will soon be available at myspace.com/thegroovecafe.

--Kate Merrigan

nBEAT Celebrates the Year!

The Northern Berkshire Exploratory Arts Troop celebrated their year of community art explorations with about 20 family and friends on May 12, in an open storefront at 73 Main Street, in downtown North Adams. A huge thank you to David Carver and Associates for allowing the group to gather in that space. Over pizza and strawberries, highlights from the year were shared. Also on view was a small exhibition of drawings, writing samples and comic book creations that the group produced after their various explorations, many of which will be continued independently throughout the summer. If you are an interested middle school student or know of one who may be interested in this kind of program, please contact **Alison** for more information at **663-7588** or send an email to abasdekis@nbccoalition.org.

--Alison Basdekis

"The mission of NBN is to connect and support residents within neighborhoods to build community, create stronger neighborhoods, and make linkages to groups, institutions and other resources."

NORTHERN BERKSHIRE NEIGHBORS

A fishing derby proves fun for all ages

Once again the special folks from the Berkshire Outdoorsmen and the Adams Sportsmen's Club came together to provide a simply wonderful fishing derby for children. Over 35 youth and adults attended this spectacular day of fishing on Saturday, June 7 at the small private Reynolds's Pond in Cheshire. Andrea Peters and Kathy Keeser shuttled the majority of the children in the BerkshireRides vans from North Adams to Cheshire. The children worked with members from the Outdoorsmen and Sportsmen Clubs to hook their worms/bait and learn to use their rod to reel in and out trying to catch fish, without hooking anyone else! Then we stopped for a cookout lunch, also provided and cooked by members from the Sportsmen/Outdoorsmen's clubs. At the end of the day, after catching fish and maybe learning to clean the fish, the children were all given their fishing poles to keep! Though the day was hot, the shade around the pond, the cool drinks and the wonderful company of the Sportsmen/Outdoorsmen kept us all cool and happy.

--Kathy Keeser

Community Connections: Best parents we can be

Sixteen parents completed the parenting program "Best Parents We Can Be" with a graduation celebration at the LINC'S Parent Center on June 16. This twelve-session program designed to meet the requirements of parenting classes for families, covered basic topics all parents need to provide a healthy and safe growth experience for their children. Facilitators Marcia Hickson and Natalie Cain enjoyed getting to know the parents over a twelve-week period. Most of the parents were satisfied with the group experience and expressed appreciation for the transportation and childcare that was provided. Special thanks to Sue Beauchamp at the LINC'S Parent Center for her supportive presence and attention to organizational details, and to Kathy Keeser for arranging transportation and her dedication to managing and connecting all the pieces for a successful program.

--Natalie Cain

Blackinton Neighborhood group works on safety and history

The Blackinton Neighbors Association has a neighborhood watch program up and running in collaboration with Sgt. Bill Baker and Officer Mark Bailey. Concerns about speeding on Massachusetts Avenue and the noise disturbances due to the train as it passes through the area are two of their major concerns. At the most recent meeting, the group began discussing how to renovate and spruce up the historic Blackinton Cemetery. The groups will be planning work parties and will seek community volunteers who are interested in history and who would be willing to help the group restore some features in the cemetery and to re-position gravestones.



Residents of the Blackinton neighborhood gather to discuss renovation ideas

Neighborhood Baseball starts its fourth season

This summer, starting in mid-July, we will start our fourth season of Neighborhood Baseball. The goal of Neighborhood Baseball is to encourage community spirit, teamwork, and participation with little emphasis on competition. The teams are made up of youth, both boys and girls ages 8-16, who live in a particular neighborhood or community. Most of our youth have not had previous experience with organized sports and this provides them with their first experience and has been a springboard for youth to join regular organized sports. Overall the program builds confidence and teaches cooperation and is loads of fun for everyone. In the past years, we have had teams from neighborhoods in North Adams and also a team from the town of Florida. If there is a team from another neighborhood or community in Northern Berkshire that would be interested in participating in Neighborhood Baseball from about July 20 – August 20, please contact Kathy Keeser at the Coalition, 663-7588, ext. 13 or send an email to kkeeser@nbcoalition.org.

Tunnelbrook Watchdogs continue to meet

The neighborhood group at Tunnel Brook apartments may be a new group, but they are mighty! They have been meeting for the past few months and have a solid neighborhood watch program working closely with the police to make a difference in their small neighborhood. This summer, while continuing to work with the police, they are also working with REACH on a community garden, and are planning a community picnic and other neighborhood gatherings. Go Watchdogs!!!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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Media Contacts for Northern Berkshire

All news outlets in Northern Berkshire are happy to receive press releases by e-mail. Be mindful of the deadlines for each outlet, and make sure the important details -- who, what, when, and where -- are clear in the beginning of your release. Include a contact name and number.

Sometimes a follow-up phone call is helpful, and if you have a relationship with a reporter, make sure he or she gets a copy, too.

- Advocate news@advocateweekly.com>
- Beacon (MCLA) <beacon@mcla.mass.edu>
- Bennington Banner
 <news@benningtonbanner.com>
- Berkshire Eagle <news@berkshireeagle.com>
- Berkshire Living
 <seth@berkshirelivingmag.com>
- CapNews9 <news@capitalnews9.com>
- CBS6 Albany <mbw@wrgb.com>
- Gazette <gazette@berkshire.net>
- Hill Country Observer
 <calendar@hillcountryobserver.com>
- iBerkshires.com <info@iberkshires.com>
- N. Adams Tourism Office (Rod Bunt)
 <tourism@northadams-ma.gov>
- Northern Berkshire Community TV
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- Time Warner <albch22ad@twcable.com>
- Transcript <news@thetranscript.com>
- WAMC
 Berkshire Bureau <news@wamc.org>
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- WilliNet <willinet@williams.edu>
- WNAW <news@wnaw.com>
- WNYT <releases@wnyt.com>
- Women's Times
 <berknews@thewomenstimes.com>
- WUPE/WBEC <news@wupe.com>

"Terms of Surrender" showing in MCLA Gallery 51

"Terms of Surrender," a multimedia exhibition of work by North Adams artist Rich Remsberg, opened on **June 26** in MCLA Gallery 51 in downtown North Adams. The show will remain in the gallery through **July 27**. MCLA Gallery 51 is at **51 Main St.** in North Adams. For more information, **(413) 664-8718**, or go to **www.mcla.edu/gallery51**.

United Cerebral Palsy Association announces 10th Annual Golf Classic

The United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County will hold its 10th Annual Golf Classic on **Wednesday, July 9** at **Waubeeka Golf Links** in Williamstown. All funds raised are used to support UCP services to children and adults with disabilities and their families in Berkshire County. For more information, to register or make a donation, please contact **Christine Singer or Joni Thomas at (413) 442-1562**.

Berkshire SHARE offers July food package

Berkshire SHARE/ Serve New England can help stretch your grocery money; orders will be taken through **July 10**, with a pickup day on **July 26**. The \$26 package contains lots of healthy food choices with delicious meat options, fruits and vegetables, and a surprise product. The Berkshire SHARE Co-op is open on **Thursdays 2-6 PM** through the red door on the parking lot side of **St. John's Church in North Adams**. Cash, checks, and EBT cards are accepted. This offer is open to all community members, regardless of income. For information, please call **664-7400**.

Wordplay @ Papyri Books

Wordplay is co-sponsored by Inkberry and Papyri Books. It is held the **second Saturday** evening each month at Papyri Books at **7:00 p.m.** Wordplay hosts a guest author each month who reads from his or her work and answers questions at the conclusion of the reading. Refreshments, Open Mic, and a visit to Papyri Gallery to see the work of local artists follow. Our featured author for July is Derek Gentile, a writer for the Berkshire Eagle, who departs from his usual genre of sports writing to read from his latest book, a mystery, *The Vanilla Envelope*. August Wordplay features Michele LaFlamme-Childs, a North Adams native returning for a visit to read from her work-in-progress "Chiaroscuro," a collection of poetry, essays, and short fiction. The Open Mic is an opportunity for guests to share their work and five minutes is allotted for each reader, as there are many participants each month. Hope to see you **Saturday, July 12** and **Saturday, August 9** at **7:00 p.m.** at **Papyri Books, 45 Eagle Street, North Adams**. For more information, please call **662-2099**.

Paul W. Marino Historical Walks schedule

Local historian Paul Marino has announced the schedule of remaining guided walks for the year. Except where noted, all walks are on **Saturday** afternoons, beginning at **2:30 p.m.** Rain, high winds, and illness cancel, but nothing else. Walkers should be advised to wear comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing, sun block, carry along a bottle of water, bring children, and have your ears talked off! The schedule is as follows: July 19, Hillside Cemetery beginning at top of hill off Brown Street; August 2, Church Street beginning at Smith House on the MCLA campus; August 16, Center Street beginning at corner of Center and Marshall Streets; Wednesday, August 20 @ 5 p.m., Main Street beginning at West end of street by Subway; September 6, Hillside Cemetery second tour; September 20, Main Street second walk; October 4, Southview Cemetery beginning at entrance opposite the Drury High School driveway; and October 25, Hillside Cemetery third tour.

Concert at the Lake series has begun

The free Concert at the Lake series runs each **Wednesday, July 2** through **August 6**, beginning at **7:00 p.m.** Each concert lasts approximately an hour and a half at the **Windsor Lake** in North Adams. Bring a chair or blanket to sit on, and enjoy some great performances!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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North Adams farmer's market opens soon

The North Adams farmer's market takes place in the **St. Anthony's Municipal parking lot** on **Saturday** mornings from **8:00 a.m. to noon**. The market is in operation **July 12** through **October 25**. An EBT machine is available on the premises. Please call during business hours Monday through Friday to arrange a free ride to the market, **664-0300**.

SHINE Program of Elder Services announces seminar

The SHINE Program of Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc. will be hosting a pre-retirement seminar entitled "Hitting The Mark" on **Thursday, July 24** from **3:00-5:00 p.m.** at their offices at **66 Wendell Avenue in Pittsfield**. Dan Moraski from the Springfield Social Security office will answer questions about Social Security benefits, and Margie Ware of the SHINE Program will discuss Medicare, supplemental insurance, prescription coverage and public benefit programs. Please call **1-800-544-5242** or **(413) 499-0524 x109** to register or for more information.

Berkshire North WIC hosts annual mother-baby bonding event

On **Friday, August 8, 2008**, Berkshire North WIC will be holding its annual Mother-Baby bonding event in celebration of World Breast Feeding Week. The event will be from **10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the **Berkshire Mall** in Lanesborough, in front of JC Penney. There will be information on breast feeding and raising children, infant massages, balloons, face painting, give aways, and free raffles. There will also be performances by David Grover & The Big Bear Band, and a magic show by Magical Moments. Everything is free! For more information, please contact **Michelle Sylvester** at **(413) 445-9412**.

Summer Camp at the Williamstown Youth Center

Summer camp at the Williamstown Youth Center continues until **August 15th**. Clubs, field trips to many recreational and cultural sites, as well as exciting daily activities are offered for children. This is all for only \$100 per week. The camp is open to children entering grades 1-8. For more information or to register, please call **458-5925**.

Habitat for Humanity seeks Summer volunteers

We need your help - we need your people power! Habitat for Humanity is currently building a home for a young family on **Henderson Road** in **Williamstown**. We are eager to finish the home by August this year so the family's children can start the year at their new school. We are in great need of volunteers, age 16 or older, of all skill levels to help in some way. We work on **Saturday mornings** every week with a supervisor on site who will provide work direction. We have the materials and supplies, but we'll need community members to help us get to the finish. Please call **Chris Costine** in the Habitat Humanity office in North Adams at **664-4440** to sign up or to get more information.

Northern Berkshire Tennis Association offers scholarships

The Northern Berkshire Community Tennis Association has received two generous donations and can now support between 10-20 scholarships for kids for their Summer Tennis 2008 program. Our Court Appeal Campaign will be first come, first served. Preference will be given to African, Latino, Asian and Native Americans, and children living in low-income neighborhood populations. Please contact the NBCTA at **663-5380** or send an email to **tennis123@roadrunner.com** for more information.

Northern Berkshire Grows community gardens in bloom

The Northern Berkshire Grows community gardens are planted and growing beautifully in the following neighborhoods: Greylock Apartments, Brayton Hill, Mohawk Forest, Tunnelbrook Estates, UNO/Bracewell Avenue, and Louison House. The Neighborhood Leaders will be hosting weekly garden clubs in each neighborhood so residents can learn to maintain and harvest their vegetables. If you are a resident of one of these neighborhoods and would like more information, please contact **Jennifer Munoz** at REACH: **664-5284** or send an email to **jmunoz@nbhealth.org**. We'd love to have you join us!

Northern Berkshire Faith Institutions and Leaders

Adams

First Baptist Church 15 Commercial Street
Pastor Donald E. Gray
First Congregational 42 Park Street 743-1677
Rev. Mike Mullany
Notre Dame Church 21 Maple Street 743-1767
Rev. Daniel J. Boyle
St. Mark's Episcopal P.O. Box 191 743-0947
Rev. R. Ellen White
St. Stanislaus Kostka 25 Hoosac St., 743-0041
Rev. Daniel J. Boyle
St. Thomas Church Columbia Street 743-0575
Rev. Daniel J. Boyle

Cheshire

Cheshire First Baptist Church 743-3649
Pastor Rick Newton
St. Mary of the Assum. 159 Church Street 743-2110
Rev. David Raymond
United Methodist Church 743-0133
Pastor Warren Scamman

Florida

Florida Baptist Church Road 664-6055
Rev. Roy Burdick

Hancock

Hancock Baptist Church Box 10A
Rev. Angela Buchauer

Lanesboro

Berkshire Union Chapel Route 8 445-4299
Rev. William D. Furey
St. Luke's Episcopal 20 S. Main Street 443-0165
Rev. Mary Schreiber

New Ashford

Christian Harvest Cntr 199 Mallery Rd 458-1083
Pastor Joseph D. Slonski

North Adams

Bethel Pentecostal 55 Harding Avenue 663-8998
Rev. Robert Bellofatto
Blackinton Union Massachusetts Avenue 458-8302
Pastor Eugene Kemp
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Holiday
Inn Annex of Amer. Legion Drive 802-694-1726
President: Jim Law
Congregation Beth Israel 53 Lois Street 663-5830
Rabbi Jeffrey Goldwasser
COTY Center 70 Marshall Street 663-3133
Sister Eunice Tassone
First Baptist 131 Main Street 663-3780
Rev. David Anderson
First Bible Baptist 35 Notch Road 662-2107
Pastor Eric Malachuk
First Congregational 134 Main Street 663-9940
Rev. Steven Alspach
First United Methodist 159 East Main 664-9655
Rev. Dr. Pat. MacHugh
Jehovah's Witness 984 Union Street 663-5030
St. Andrews Episcopal 1438 Mass Avenue 662-2775
Rev. Peter Pierson
St. Anthony of Padua 68 Marshall 663-5316
Rev. William Cyr
St. Francis of Assisi 12 Union Street 663-5316
Rev. William Cyr
St. John's Episcopal 59 Summer Street 664-9656
Rev. Edward King
Salvation Army 393 River Street 663-7987
Capts. Mary & James Eager

(continued on page 10)

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.

Northern Berkshire Faith Institutions and Leaders (Continued)

Savoy

Sovereign Grace Baptist 664 Main Road 447-8127
Pastor Kenneth Mick Jr.

Stamford, VT

St. John Bosco Chapel Main Road 802-694-1950
Father Joseph H. Tate
Stamford Community Main Road 802-694-1533
Rev. Bill Wilson

Williamstown

Baha'i Faith Williams College 458-8092
Sponsored by Williams College Baha'i Club
Community Bible Ch. 160 Bridges Rd. 458-5556
Rev. Douglas Duncan
First Baptist 731 Main Street 458-4811
Rev. Peter Daniels
First Congregational 906 Main Street 458-4273
Rev. Carrie Bail
First United Methodist 777 Main Street 458-3183
Rev. Dr. Pat MacHugh
St. John's Episcopal 35 Park Street 458-8144
Rev. Peter Elvin
St. Patrick and Raphael 54 Southworth 458-5443
Rev. Mark Burke
Second Congregational 81 Hancock Rd. 458-3467
Rev. Penny Rich Smith
White Oaks Cong. 480 White Oaks Road 458-4633
Rev. Ralph "Ty" Campbell
Williams Coll. Chap. 39 Chapin Hall Dr. 597-2483
Rev. Richard Spalding

CORRECTIONS BOX:

Our apologies to Mary Sugden who was omitted from the listing of the Board of Directors on our Annual Report due to a formatting error. Mary has been a loyal member of our Board of Directors for over a decade, and we hope she will continue for decades to come.

UNO Spring Fling was huge success!

United Neighborhood Organization (UNO)'s Spring Fling was a huge success! UNO held their annual Spring Fling on Saturday, May 24 at the Eagle's Hall in North Adams with over 750 people in attendance. There were many tents and food carts lined up on the lawn, along with more than 50 vendors inside and out. Vendors included tag sales, crafters with jewelry, knitted items, wood crafts, paintings and much more. Polish foods, hot sausage subs, meatball subs, hot dogs, fried dough, frozen bananas dipped in chocolate, a bake sale, and delicious pop corn were enjoyed by the crowd. All of the food vendors sold out. Bev Goodell kept the children happy with her beautiful face paintings. The Chinese auction, manned by the SHARE program, handed out prizes to over twenty winners. The 50/50 raffle was won by Donna Valliers from North Adams, and the free raffle was won by Gwen Hillard from Adams. It was a beautiful, sunny day, and UNO made \$1,180 from the rental of tables and half of the 50/50. This was more than \$400 over last year's amount. This money will allow UNO to do many programs in their neighborhood, especially for the children. Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the day such a success! The UNO committee who worked at this event were: Edna Rudnick, Joan Preite, Kay Clark, Gail Nelson, Andrea Peters, Pete Wheeler, Bob Davis, and yours truly, Shirley Davis. For information on UNO, please call Shirley at 663-5516.

S.A.Y. It Proud Campaign accepts nominations

The Supporting and Acknowledging Youth (S.A.Y. It Proud) Campaign is accepting Summer nominations. Recognize youth ages 11 to 19 for doing helpful, caring or important tasks for others, involvement in positive activities, making healthy choices, and working hard. Nominees will be chosen, then interviewed, and a column about them will be published in the North Adams Transcript. Please send nominations to **Kathy Keeser** at the Coalition office, **61 Main Street Suite 218, North Adams**. You may also call Kathy at **663-7588** for more information.

Watch Your Mouth!

Research tells us that when the mouth is not healthy, neither is the rest of the body. Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said it best: "you are not healthy without good oral health. Oral health is part of general health, and it can affect your overall quality of life." Watch Your Mouth (WYM) is a public awareness campaign emphasizing the importance of children's oral health. WYM collaborates with communities to prevent the most common chronic childhood disease: dental decay. Dental disease affects children's educational progress and the most basic daily activities such as eating, speaking and learning. It doesn't have to be this way; solutions exist and Massachusetts citizens are banding together to identify solutions.

By ensuring that children have access to preventive treatments early and often, we can prevent the majority of this disease from occurring. We take pride in our community laws that keep us healthy. In the past, we have passed seat belt laws to protect our drivers and pedestrians, and removed tobacco from bars and restaurants to protect our workforce. Today, we need to work together to give kids access to preventive treatments such as early childhood screenings and dental sealants. Making these services available by partnering with dental professionals and school health centers are effective ways to reach all children in Berkshire County. Please contact **Czarina Biton** at WYM today, **617-275-2838** for more information.

Summer Program and Activity Guides available!

Contact the coalition (**Kathy Keeser – kkeeser@nbccoalition.org**) for a copy of the comprehensive summer guide for children and families. We can send it to you electronically as a PDF document and we have a limited number of hard copies available. The guide includes summer camps, library programs, movie nights, special events and more held in North Adams, Adams, Williamstown and beyond.

COALITION CALENDAR

Improving the quality of life for people in Northern Berkshire by organizing, supporting, and empowering the community.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

****The North Adams Eagle Street Beach****
Wednesday, July 16, 4-7 p.m.

****The Mettawee River Theater Company @ Windsor Lake****
Thursday, July 17, 8 p.m.

****National Night Out****
Tuesday, August 5, 6-8 p.m.

****Shakespeare @ the Pond (Windsor Lake)****
Sunday, August 17, 4 p.m.

****Mayor's Annual Downtown Celebration****
Wednesday, August 20, 5:30-9 p.m.

TBA in September, 7:00 p.m.
(Williamstown)
August 27, 5:30 p.m.
(Adams)

CMCA Strategy Team Meetings

Adams Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (AMCA) and Williamstown Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (WMCA) are grassroots initiatives to reduce teenagers' access to alcohol. Strategy teams made up of local citizens meet monthly to guide project priorities and actions. To learn more about getting involved in the Williamstown team, contact **Liz Shiner** by e-mail at dzzylizy59@hotmail.com or leave a message for her at the Coalition office (663-7588). For the Adams team, contact **Sarah Kline** at 663-7588 or bbbs@nbccoalition.org.

September 10, 11:00 a.m.

Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative

The monthly meetings are held **the first Wednesday of each month (September through June) at 11:00 a.m.** at the Coalition, 61 Main St., Suite 218, North Adams. At the September meeting, the group will form a list of topics to be discussed at the monthly meetings through the year. To get on the group's e-mail list, contact **Kate Merrigan** at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org.

July 30, 4:00 p.m.

TAKE CHARGE planning meeting

The North Adams TAKE CHARGE Campaign to Save Energy will meet to discuss visibility at August events, the official launch and details of implementation. The meeting will be held at the North Adams Public Library, in the third floor community room. For more information, please email **Morgan** at morgan.goodwin@gmail.com or call **Al Bashevkin** at 413-663-7588.

September 12, 10:00 a.m.

Coalition Monthly Forum

Join us for the September monthly forum of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The discussion will be about "Emerging Issues in Our Community: Setting our agenda for the year ahead." The meeting is held at the **First Baptist Church in North Adams, at the corner of Eagle and Main streets.** Use the Eagle Street entrance.

Summer 2008

Coalition Staff

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Carolyn Leab: cleab@nbccoalition.org

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Asheque Shams: 10aes@williams.edu

Final Thoughts . . .

All of my grandparents came to America from a part of what used to be or still is Russia. With my past in mind, I'm getting ready to take a trip that I've dreamed about for decades. Led by our choral director, Janet McGhee, thirty-five (or so) singers of the Battenkill Chorale will be traveling to Russia to sing our multicultural repertoire, and to work to create a singing exchange program with our soon to be made Russian friends. We're a remarkably diverse group that includes farmers, computer geeks, insurance salesmen, students, retired people...well you get it. We're all very different, and when we get together I know these people not by what they do, but by how they contribute to our choral sound.

Kinda how it works for the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition.

This past week, I had the pleasure of listening to a group of twelve or so teens stand up at the Main Street Stage in front of very bright lights and read works they composed during the Teen Writers' Workshop. These teens are as different and diverse as the Battenkill Chorale. One would not expect them to hang together, but the support they offered each other when they read was obvious. What brings these teens together is not music, but writing. It helps to have Robin Lehlitner (she really is fantastic at this!) gently prodding our teens and Kate Merrigan as a caring presence assisting Robin. It helps that many writers don't leave this setting. I'm impressed by the participants who have moved on in life, yet come back to the Writers' Workshop for comfort and support. Our writer's community is one that does not end with high school graduation.

And that is what I believe is the true strength of our community organization, the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. We are different people coming together for a broader goal. Whether it's improving our neighborhoods, reducing our energy needs and thus our carbon footprint, investing our time in addressing broader social issues, or just to have fun, we are a Coalition because of everyone's willingness to come together to work for the greater whole. The Writers' Workshop is just one example of how our process unfolds, but it happens here many times each week. Attend a Coalition event and you can see it in process. Our next major event will be our September monthly forum, Friday September 12 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Baptist Church in North Adams. We'll also be visible at National Night Out and the Mayor's Downtown Celebration. Check us out soon!

--Al Bashevkin

61 Main Street, Suite 218
North Adams, MA 01247

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition



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