



Greening the Berkshires with Leadership from Local Collegians

The Coalition turned a shade of green at its April monthly forum, with the topic “Greening the Berkshires with Leadership from local Collegians.” Inviting representatives from both Williams College and MCLA the sixty-eight gathered community members and social service providers heard from both students and college administrators as to what environmental initiatives are in place on campus and beyond. Other environmental agencies and professionals were also included in the forum discussion to help link the collegiate efforts and ideals to the greater Northern Berkshire Community.



To begin, Williams College senior Morgan Goodwin, with the help of other Williams College students, described the various stakeholders in what has been dubbed “The Green Revolution.” With pictures and a brief performance, a spectrum of people was described. The group sighted first the “young girl” who cares deeply about the safety of polar bears; enraged, she writes Congress about her concerns. Secondly, a “displaced person” from New Orleans who remains housed in a FEMA trailer after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina- a natural disaster thought to have been caused by the rapid changes and effects of global warming. Thirdly, the “middle aged woman” who is knowledgeable about the effects of global warming; she drives a Prius, shops at Whole Foods, buys only organic and local foods when able, and hopes to convert her home into an energy efficient, green model. Lastly, the presentation sited “Hank,” a man looking for more training opportunities as a builder or installer in the field which has increasingly been referred to as “Green Collar” work. With the **push to retrofit our lifestyles to become more environmentally savvy**, these students highlight the likelihood for workforce development, but not just for the skilled environmental scientists. Instead, there’s a real potential for creating skilled labor through organized training, with hopes of establishing a sustainable workforce, as Goodwin stated, “offering green pathways out of poverty.” MASS PIRG organizer and MCLA affiliate, Tracie Konopinski, warned the forum that we must reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2020, in order to drastically reduce the heating of the planet and hopefully reverse the degradation of the earth as we know it. She highlighted strategies in place on the MCLA campus, including the Campus Climate Challenge, an effort to organize campuses in the push for policy change on a regional level, to collectively create a “just and sustainable future.” Joining students nationally, MCLA students committed March 6th to a call-in day, repeatedly phoning local legislators to convince them to **take the climate pledge to reduce carbon emissions**. Other efforts on MCLA’s campus have been to evaluate whether the college is effectively “walking the walk,” as Spencer Moser, Event Coordinator and Director of the MCLA Center for Service and Citizenship, stated. To determine MCLA’s place in **the fight against global warming**, the campus is currently undergoing an evaluation of its carbon footprint and the institution of a recycling program. Other special projects, such as community gardens and the fabrication of solar ovens, are engaging local youth in MCLA’s effort to educate people about better environmental practices.

A statement from the Global Warming Solutions Act was circulated by an MCLA affiliate stating, “Global Warming is a huge problem which affects everyone in Massachusetts. There is unprecedented support across the state for bold action to stop global warming.” The “bold action” has largely been spearheaded by student leaders and college administrators working on campus wide efforts, as well as working to reach state legislators, with rippling effects nationally. **How can we invigorate the greater community and reach other generations?** How can we be sure low-income households and renters are not left out of the greening process? How can these “bold actions” help us establish a green economy in our community? Offering some answers was the Center for Ecological Technology (CET), a Pittsfield and Northampton based organization. Through CET, homeowners and landlords can obtain free energy audits for homes with up to four units. Other incentives, including federal rebates for installing energy efficient utility measures in homes, are available. **To learn more, please read an article that follows on page 4**, and plan to join CET’s Nancy Nysten and members of the coalition for a follow-up discussion, scheduled for Wednesday, May 14 at 3 p.m. at the North Adams Public Library. For more information please call 663-7588.

--Alison Basdekis

In this issue...

Coalition News.....	2-5
UNITY News.....	6
Neighborhood News.....	7
Community Bulletin Board.....	8-10
Coalition Calendar.....	11
Final Thoughts.....	12

NEXT COALITION MEETING:

Teens Take On Tough Topic: Youth Substance Abuse

Friday May 9
10:00 a.m. to noon
First Baptist Church
North Adams
Eagle Street entrance

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.

Summer Newsletter Deadline **June 6, 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!

May Coalition Meeting:

Teens take on tough topic: Youth Substance Abuse

Each year the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition invites youth leaders from the UNITY Youth Leadership Program to lead a monthly forum discussion. The May forum (May 9th from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the First Baptist Church in North Adams) will be this year’s youth led forum. Teens who will be leading our conversation are participants in the UNITY Youth Leadership Program facilitated by Kate Merrigan and Alison Basdekis. Youth Leadership Program participants meet weekly to talk about current issues and perform twenty hours of community service during the year. The UNITY youth leaders worked hard to determine a topic that would be both helpful to area teens and to the adult participants of the monthly forums. The topic of the May monthly forum is youth substance abuse, and teens will facilitate a discussion that can hopefully shed some solutions on this issue.

Join us on May 9th for the monthly Coalition forum to share in this discussion with local teens. For information about the forum, you can contact UNITY Program staff (Kate or Alison) at the Coalition office. For more information about the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, contact **Al Bashevkin** at **663-7588**.

--Al Bashevkin

Youth Collaborative Continues to Explore Tricky Topics

In April, members of the Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative held a roundtable discussion about the presence of alcohol in our lives as adults who work with young people. The discussion did not reach any particular conclusions, but was rather an opportunity for youth workers to explore our feelings and values about adults drinking in the presence of underage youth. The meeting was facilitated by Brianne Gyurjan (Substance Abuse Specialist at the Brien Center), Jenna Cece (who coordinates Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol as part of her Project Specialist position at nbCC), and Sarah Kline (coordinator for Adams Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol).

The May meeting of the NBYC, to be held on **Wednesday, May 7, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**, will feature presentations on the topic of teen sexuality from Lauren Vining of Tapestry Health Family Planning, and Jennifer Munoz of the REACH Community Health Foundation. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month, September through June. Any adults who work with youth or are interested in the month’s special topic are welcome to join in our discussions. Please contact **Kate Merrigan** at **663-7588** for more information.

--Kate Merrigan

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

nbCC Hosts 22nd Annual Meeting

Join us for the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The Annual meeting will take place on Friday, June 6 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Williams Inn in Williamstown. The guest speaker will be John Auerbach, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, who will be addressing current public health issues affecting the Commonwealth. Northern Berkshire Heroes Dick Alcombright and Stan Brown will be honored. There will be presentations by youth participants in UNITY as well as a performance by the Experience Dance ensemble of Northern Berkshire Neighbors. The suggested donation to attend is \$20. Companies and larger organizations are encouraged to reserve a table for the celebration. You can reserve a seat or a table by returning the **enclosed flyer**, or by contacting the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition at **663-7588**.

--Al Bashevkin

Mill City Productions has a new home

After four years of being a traveling theatre company, Mill City Productions finally has a home! In the beginning of March, the City of North Adams helped to make a four year goal a reality, by granting us a wonderful space in Building 4 at the Western Gateway Heritage State Park. Immediately, plans were made and tools were brought out to get the space ready for our production of the Stephen Sondheim musical, "Assassins" at the end of April. It was a lot of work, especially while in the midst of rehearsing and of course all of us having full-time jobs already, but we achieved our goal and played to very supportive, excited and sold out audiences during the April 24th- 27th run. We could not have been happier with the outcome.

Of course there is still more work to be done, and improvements to be made. Mill City is looking for donations of any kind- monetary, lumber, tools, paint, furniture, costumes, etc. To get in contact with us, please visit our website at www.millcityproductions.org. We look forward to producing more theatre for the community, and hope to provide a wide variety of offerings so everyone can find something that interests them. The community's support has been wonderful. We could not have gotten this far without you. Be on the lookout for a cabaret fundraiser this Summer, and a stage adaptation of the classic story, "The Little Prince" in September. See you at the theatre!

--Liz Urban



L to R: Marissa Carlson, Mike Grogan, Laini Sporbert, and Liz Urban of MCP @ their new space

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July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

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Greening the Berkshires - Steps We Can Take Today

I had the pleasure of attending my first Coalition meeting on April 11th and found the passion of the college students to be inspiring. Their presentation about climate change helped us all see the strong connections between the environment and our social and economic well-being. The idea of reducing our carbon footprint can often seem abstract and overwhelming, but we heard that many initiatives are already underway and there are many opportunities for each of us to make changes: in our home, our work and in our community.

We learned that the greenhouse gasses contributing most significantly to global climate change are from electric power plants and fuels we use to heat our homes and run our vehicles. By reducing our energy use we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions – and we cut our costs. Sounds like a win-win-win.

So, what can we do? Call for an energy audit today! Many at the meeting were surprised to learn that there are still free energy audits for homes and financial incentives to help pay for energy improvements.

- If you live in a one, two, three or four-unit building call Mass Save today at 1-866-527-7283 or contact them online at <http://www.massave.com>. An energy advisor will look at your home from attic to basement and identify where energy improvements can be made.

- 0% interest financing and rebates are available from National Grid for insulation, energy efficient heating systems and refrigerators.

- Or, if you heat with natural gas, contact Berkshire Gas Company's energy efficiency hotline at 1-800-944-3212 and they will schedule an audit and tell you about financial incentives to make energy improvements.

- Western Mass. Electric Company (WMECO) offers 0% percent financing as well.

There are many opportunities for those interested in renewable energy. To learn more about solar energy, come to CET's "Solar Energy for Your Home or Business" presentation at the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield on May 7 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Register by contacting Cynthia Grippaldi at 413-445-4556 x25 or cynthiag@cetonline.org. You can also support clean energy through National Grid's Green-Up program.

Let's harness the passion and excitement of our youth, and start today to reduce our environmental impacts...knowing that we each can make a difference. For additional information, visit our website at www.cetonline.org.

Energy saving tip: Did you know that for every degree you set your thermostat back for eight hours (e.g., while you sleep) you cut your heating bill by about 1 percent? That means setting the thermostat back from 68 degrees to 60 degrees at night or when you are at work is about an 8% savings! Install a programmable thermostat and start saving today.

--Nancy Nysten, CET

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

Best Parents We Can Be

Community Connections certainly have played a significant roll in developing and implementing a 12-week parenting series designed to assist DSS referred parents in strengthening their skills and gaining support for themselves. Although close to 30 parents called with interest in participation, the class was full at 18. The group has been meeting on Monday evenings at the LINCS Parenting Center with co-facilitators Marcia Hickson and Natalie Cain. Transportation and childcare make it possible for the parents to attend. In a warm friendly atmosphere, the parents participate in learning and sharing about child development, home safety, medical needs, self-care and dealing with stress. With a separate topic for each week, we know that there is always room for further exploration and practice. As follow-up and support to the group members, Northern Berkshire Neighbors has provided limited help to connect individuals with particular services they may need. Because many of these struggling parents are residents in neighborhoods where NBN is present, we are happy to know that we can continue supporting them when the classes are over. Thanks to the LINCS Parenting Center, the Parent Resource Planning group and the agencies they represent, and to DSS for making this pilot program possible.

--Natalie Cain

Prevention Happenings at the Coalition

We are underway with various prevention projects at the Coalition this Spring, including social marketing strategies, environmental prevention strategies, plans to attend the New England School of Prevention Studies, and production of DVDs from the presentation given by Dr. Alex Sabo in March. Preliminary meetings have occurred with a Vermont based production company to create new television commercials addressing issues facing youth in our community today. Themes for the commercials include recognizing youth for the good things they do, and preventing parent and young adult enabling of youth access to alcohol. Look for the commercials later this Spring, airing on all major television networks. The Coalition is fortunate and excited to be sending several leaders from our Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol program to the 8th Annual New England School of Prevention Studies in June. Project Coordinator Jenna Cece will attend, along with WMCA strategy team leader Liz Shiner, and team member Laini Sporbert. Lynda Field, a member of AMCA, will represent her team. Just before this conference, server trainings will be offered at the end of May (dates to be scheduled) as a free opportunity for all Berkshire County liquor establishments to have their staff trained on proper safety and liability around serving procedures. Three trainings will be offered by a licensed trainer, one in each of the North, Central, and South regions of Berkshire County. Copies will soon be available for distribution of the DVD of "The Neuroscience of Addiction: Why Prevention is so Important in Our Youth," a talk given in late March by Dr. Alex Sabo of Berkshire Medical Center. If you would like to borrow a copy from the Coalition office, or for further information regarding the above prevention projects, please contact **Jenna Cece** at **663-7588** or email jcece@nbccoalition.org.

--Jenna Cece

Take advantage of Berkshire SHARE

Did you know that Berkshire SHARE is open to everyone? Regardless of your household income, age, or address, you are eligible to take advantage of Serve New England's bulk buying power to purchase great food at great prices! Every month, a family bag includes fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as meat and pantry staples - for just \$25! Specials each month feature gourmet pasta dishes, steaks and stuffed chicken breasts, and other great foods, all for very reasonable prices. Stop in to the brand new Berkshire SHARE office in St. John's Church (same building, but new office across the hall) any **Thursday** afternoon **between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.** You may also call the office at **664-7400**.

--Kim McMann

You're Invited: Teen Writing Workshop Public Reading & Celebration is May 29th!

It's that time of year again! Members of the UNITY Teen Writing Workshop have been working hard all year on creating new work, reviving and revising old work, and polishing it all up to be published in our teen literary journal, *Somewhere Between*. The public is invited to get a taste of the work of these innovative and passionate young writers on **Thursday, May 29**, at the Main Street Stage in North Adams. A reading of student work will be held from **7 p.m. to 9 p.m.** with a reception to follow. This event is free of charge, but seating is limited.

--Kate Merrigan

Groove Continues to Hold Shows at Their New Favorite Haunt

Groovers kicked off April school break with an open mic night at the Masonic Temple in North Adams. For anyone who missed that show, there is another chance coming up to catch a Groove event at the Temple. On Friday, May 16, Groove hosts three bands at the Masonic Temple from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. At press time, Reason 837, Widdow Bone, and the Pop Collars were set to play at this show. Visit myspace.com/thegroovecafe anytime for up-to-date info. Many thanks to the Masonic Temple for sharing their space with us!

--Kate Merrigan



Groove members Leah and Emily promote open mic night by entertaining passersby in front of the Masonic Temple

Youth Leaders Kick Off Sexual Harassment Awareness Campaign

Through March and April, members of UNITY's Youth Leadership Program created a three-part community education project on sexual harassment amongst youth. Using information and insights gained from their 6-week training on sexual harassment from Phee Mayer of the Berkshire Violence Prevention Center, the group created materials designed to bring attention to lesser known facts about sexual harassment (including the information that high school boys experience sexual harassment nearly as much as girls do). The group sent a letter to middle and high school principals sharing what they had learned, offered to come speak to staff/student groups, created posters to hang in school hallways and in the community, and created a YouTube video to illustrate their views on the topic. Check out the video at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=DZ4NVRfeddE>.

Stay tuned...UNITY staff and two UNITY youth have been very involved in planning the second annual Berkshire Youth Development Conference for high school students (scheduled for May 1st and 2nd). In next month's newsletter, we will be reporting on this exciting event!

--Kate Merrigan

nBEAT explores past projects

The Northern Berkshire Exploratory Art Troop (nBEAT) explored art in nature last month at the Natural Bridge State Park. After crossing the bridge and exploring the old quarry, the group visited the Guardian Sculpture Park, a past CommUNITY Arts project where UNITY participants collaborated with local artists to realize their own artistic expressions through public sculpture. Moved, the group returned to workshop, setting out to finish many of the projects inspired by the year's explorations, while others will remain in their draft phase, perhaps to be completed over the summer or saved for next year. The last meeting of nBEAT is **May 12**. Participants will share their memories and projects from the year. If you'd like to join, please contact **Alison Basdekis** at **663-7588** for more information.

--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

Experience Dance visits local dance and cultural events, while gearing up for their own performance!

Northern Berkshire Neighbors began a new project, Experience Dance, in February for youth from the neighborhoods we are working with in North Adams. One aspect of the project is to take youth to local dance and cultural events, offering exposure to other forms of dance music beyond what they are aware of already. Experience Dance took youth and their families to MASS MoCA for a Bollywood Dance party. On a Saturday afternoon, a few youth went to a tap-dance show. This past weekend, youth attended the MCLA Dance Company's year-end show. In addition, youth attended a step dance performance at Williams and Kusika dance performances on Main Stage at the '62 Center of Williams College. For these events, MASS MoCA and Williams College provided either free or discounted tickets for our participants. A small group of youth are currently learning basic dance steps from more traditional dance, including jazz, modern and ballet. This five-week class is taught by two MCLA students, Erica Allen and Erin Cleary, both who have taken dance for years and have taught classes at local dance programs. The youth taking dance include: Miki, Nisa, Jackie, and Katie from Brayton Hill and Geneeva, Jackie and Abby from Greylock Housing. After three weeks, they have learned warm up techniques and some basic steps. They are enjoying putting together a simple routine. Experience Dance is supported by a grant from the Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire.



--Kathy Keeser

Williams Lehman Council Organizes Buddies for neighborhood youth

Under the leadership and vision of William Bruce, Lehman President and now graduating senior, a "buddy/mentoring" program was started that matches Williams College athletes with neighborhood youth in two North Adams neighborhoods (Brayton Hill and Mohawk Forest). Working out the kinks for liability and program coverage took a while, but William Bruce worked with Williams staff, including Stewart Burns, to overcome the obstacles. Northern Berkshire Neighbors worked to pair the 15 college student-athletes with youth from the neighborhoods. Since beginning in March with group activities at the community rooms in the neighborhoods for several gatherings, the college students have continued to meet individually for fun times with their youth. Thanks to William Bruce and Jess Freeman for overseeing the program this year. A special thanks goes out to the Williams Buddies: Quinn Brueggeman, Kate Stephens, Whitney Kelly, Bethany Baker, Jackie Russo, Lauren Sinnenbog, Sarah Walmsley, Zach Miller, Nick Lebedoff, William Whiston, Matthew Draheim, Sara Wild, Evan Seely, Kara Duggan and Marc Pulde for being Big Buddies to 15 neighborhood youth!!

--Kathy Keeser



This is the logo for the Tunnel Brook watchdogs that was created by Jo Ann Roy, a resident of Tunnel Brook



At Brayton Hill, teen leader (in training) Miki works with Tuti and Lili on crafts

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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

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.

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Solar Energy for your home or business

A solar energy for your home or business presentation will be offered by the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) on **Wednesday, May 7**, from **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the Berkshire Athenaeum (library) on Wendell Avenue in Pittsfield. Chris Vreeland, a registered professional engineer, will be the featured speaker and will provide an overview of financial incentives available from Massachusetts and the federal government. Attendees will learn the basics about how solar hot water and solar photovoltaic panels work, the components of a solar energy system, how to determine what size system is needed, whether they have a good site and how to gain additional benefits through energy efficient improvements. Pre-registration is required and a donation of \$10 is suggested. BerkShares are accepted. If you are interested in attending, or have questions about the workshop, contact CET at **413-445-4556 ext. 25**, or email cynthiag@cetonline.org.

Berkshire AHEC Programs in May

Berkshire AHEC has several programs to announce this month. On **Thursday, May 8** from **1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** "Creating Socially Sustainable Communities" will be held at Mazzeo's Restaurant in Pittsfield. The cost is \$41, and registration is due by **May 1**. A presentation entitled "Understanding Nurse Practice Lateral Violence," is scheduled at the BMC Auditorium in Pittsfield for **Thursday, May 29**, from **5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** A cost of \$30 should be received by **May 22**. Please visit Berkshire AHEC at www.berkshireahec.org for more information on these programs, or call **413-447-2417**.

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 May is David McLaughlin, who will discuss his book *The Unfolding History of the Berkshires*. 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, May 10** at **7:00 p.m.** at **Papyri Books, 45 Eagle Street, North Adams**.

Make Art for the River @ NBCA

Northern Berkshire Creative Arts and Hoosic River Watershed Association will collaborate for NBCA's monthly Family Art Day, **May 17** from **1 p.m. to 3 p.m.** River habitats and inhabitants will be the subject of paper mache sculptures and painted banners, which will be displayed at the upcoming annual Riverfest. Family Day attendees will receive free admission to Riverfest. NBCA is a fun way for parents and caregivers to work alongside their children to create art. This event is free and open to the public, but you must call NBCA to register at **663-8338**. Please leave your name, phone number, and number and ages of children attending. For more information about NBCA, see www.nbcreativearts.org. Riverfest, the Hoosic River Watershed Association's annual celebration of the river, will be held **May 24, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at Cole Field in Williamstown. Activities feature art, music, drum circle, rafting, birds of prey, ponies, canoe parade, children's activities, raffles, food, and more. For more information, see www.hoowra.org, or call **458-2742**.

Berkshire AHEC's Annual Meeting

Berkshire AHEC's Annual Meeting will be held on **Friday, May 23** from **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** at the Cranwell Resort in Lenox. Annual AHEC Achievement Award Recipients will be honored at the meeting. The cost for the breakfast buffet is \$25. For more information, please see www.berkshireahec.org, or call **413-447-2417**.

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Berkshire Navigation Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Berkshire Navigation will be held at MCLA's Church Street Center on **Thursday, May 22** from **4:30 to 6:30 p.m.** All members of our North County communities are cordially invited to attend. For the past five years, Berkshire Navigation has tracked a range of statistical indicators that reflect the level of well-being in Northern Berkshire Communities. At the annual meeting, we will review what five years of data tells us about regional progress and issues, and how the data we track has lead to important local initiatives. We will also report on Berkshire Navigation's expanded role in tracking indicators for all of Berkshire County. For more information, and to register for the meeting, please visit the Berkshire Navigation website at <http://berkshirenavigation.com> or call **Paul Jennings** at Northern Berkshire United Way, **663-9062**.

Autism Spectrum Disorder conference offered

Hillcrest Educational Centers will offer a Spring conference for the Berkshires to educate those who care for, educate and support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This conference is sponsored by Greylock Federal Credit Union and Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation. The full-day event will take place at Jiminy Peak Resort in Hancock, Massachusetts on **May 22**, from **9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** The fee for the conference is \$89 per person, and the registration deadline is **May 12**. For more information, or to register, please contact **Michele Morin** at **413-499-7924 ext. 129**, or email mmorin@hillcresteducationalcenters.org.

BFAIR Golf Tournament and Clinic Fundraiser

Berkshire Family And Individual Resources invites you to our second annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser to benefit people with developmental disabilities, autism, and traumatic brain injury. This year's tournament also offers a clinic for beginning, intermediate and advanced players with Kay McMahon of eduKaytion Golf and David Bond. The event will be held on **May 23** at Waubeeka Golf Links in Williamstown. Lunch will be 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with a **12:30 p.m. shotgun start** to the tournament, and dinner and awards to follow at 5:30 p.m. The basic cost is \$100 per player; event sponsorships are available, and banners of sponsors will be displayed. Please call **Carol Fox** to register or for more information at **413-664-9382**.

UNO's Spring Fling 2008

UNO's Spring Fling is just around the corner. Don't miss it! This year's Spring Fling is bigger and better than ever before. The event will be held on **Saturday, May 24th** from **9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** at the Eagles Hall on Curran Highway in North Adams. We have many new vendors with tag, crafts, and food tables. The vendors will be both indoors and outside. There will be a Chinese Auction, a free door prize, and face painting for the children. Join us for a fun day of shopping, visiting, and a delicious lunch. This fundraiser helps us with programs for the children in the UNO neighborhood. We hope to see you there! For more information, please call **Shirley** at **663-5516**.

Railway Cafe hosts May concert

The last Railway Cafe concert of the season will take place on **Friday, May 30** at **7:30 p.m.** The show will be at MCLA's Gallery 51, at 51 Main Street in North Adams. Railway Cafe is a monthly folk concert series, and is completing its 7th season. Greg Greenway will be this season's final performer. The cost for admission is \$12 in advance, or \$15 at the door, and \$10 for students and seniors. For more information, email railwaycafe@juno.com, see www.railwaycafe.org, or call **413-664-6393**.

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
Williams Coll. Chap. 39 Chapin Hall Dr. 597-2483
Rev. Richard Spalding

CORRECTIONS BOX:

No mistakes to report this month...please keep checking, and be sure to let me know of any corrections or updates in this and future issues!

Berkshire AHEC offers conference in June

On **Friday, June 13**, a full-day conference entitled "Emerging Technologies in Rehabilitation" will be offered by Berkshire AHEC. The conference will be held at Cranwell Resort in Lenox, from **9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, with a cost of \$110 by the **May 23** deadline. Please visit www.berkshireahec.org or call **413-447-2417** for more information.

Northern Berkshire Grows

"Northern Berkshire Grows" Community Garden Program is getting ready for Spring! There are gardens in the following neighborhoods: Greylock Apartments, Brayton Hill, Mohawk Forest, Louison House, and Tunnelbrook. We hope to get one rolling in the Veazie Street area, too. If you live in any of these neighborhoods and would like to know more, please contact **Jennifer Munoz** at REACH, **664-5284** or jmunoz@nbhealth.org. We'd love to have you join the fun!

College financial aid easier for families adopting teens

Did you know a new bill with changes to the Higher Education Act will be in effect as of July 2009? Under the new law, youth who were adopted out of foster care at age 13 or older will qualify for federal financial aid as independent students, and youth still in foster care will also be able to fill out the federal financial aid forms (FAFSA) as independent students. An independent student, with little income or assets, would usually qualify for a nearly-full financial aid package, based solely on the teen's need, not the adoptive family's resources. Students formerly in foster care in Massachusetts and accepted into a Mass. state college or university can still be eligible for a tuition waiver. For more information, check with your Senator or Representative in Congress, or with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators at www.nasfaa.org.

CET recycling customers set office paper recycling record!

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) announced that the businesses it serves recycled a record amount of office paper in 2007. According to CET, over 160 businesses in Berkshire County recycled nearly 1,000,000 pounds of paper, producing significant environmental benefits. Recycling this paper saved more than 9,700 trees, 2,000,000 kilowatts of electricity, 3,000,000 gallons of water, and avoided 29,000 pounds of air pollution. For more information on recycling, please contact **Jamie Cahillane** at **413-445-4556 ext. 14** or email jamiec@cetonline.org.

Your Clearinghouse for Environmental Events

CET is thrilled to announce the launch of our new, dynamic community events page, where environmental groups, towns, businesses and others can add information about upcoming workshops, forums, grassroots gatherings, seminars - really, any eco-happening. Simply navigate to the page at www.cetonline.org/Events/eventsExternal.php, and click on the link that says "post your event here." We still have our CET events page at www.cetonline.org/Events/events.php, but now we can serve as a resource for publicizing all regional environmental events! For more information, please contact **Susan Slattery**, Director of Marketing and Development for CET at **413-445-4556 ext. 16**.

Northern Berkshire Creative Arts Spring programs

A new schedule has been released by Northern Berkshire Creative Arts with offerings for Spring 2008 classes, School Vacation Camp for ages 9-12, workshops, and Summer 2008 program highlights. Northern Berkshire Creative Arts is a non-profit community arts school serving all members of the Northern Berkshire community. The school is located at 115 State Street, in Building 1 at Heritage State Park in North Adams. For more information about new course offerings, please call **413-663-8338**, send an email to info@nbcreativearts.org, or visit www.nbcreativearts.org.

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

May 1, 7:00 p.m.
(Williamstown)
May 28, 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.

TBA in May, 11:00 a.m.

Building a Peaceful Community

Finding peaceful solutions in our violent world, the topic of our November forum, continues to generate exceptional interest. Follow-up discussions have been held since January, with the next workshop to be held in the conference room of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, sometime in May. Please feel free to join, and for more information contact **Phee Mayer** at the Berkshire Violence Prevention Center, 443-8040.

May 7, 11:00 a.m.

Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative

The monthly meetings are held the **first Wednesday of each month at 11:00 a.m.** at the offices of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, 85 Main St., Suite 624, North Adams. At this month's meeting, Lauren Vining of Tapestry Health Family Planning and Jennifer Munoz of the REACH Community Health Foundation will present on the topic of teen sexuality. To get on the group's e-mail list, contact the Coalition or e-mail **Kate Merrigan** at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org.

May 9, 10:00 a.m.

Coalition Monthly Forum

Join us for the May monthly forum of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The discussion will be lead by local youth, and is entitled "Teens Take on Tough Topic: Youth Substance Abuse." (See story on page 2.) 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.

May 5, 7:30 p.m.
May 9, 8:00 p.m.

Northern Berkshire Tonite

The talk show of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, hosted by **Al Bashevkin** and **Scott Nichols**, each month takes a look at key issues of concern to the residents of Northern Berkshire County. This month their guests will be Kate Merrigan, Alison Basdekis, and youth members of the UNITY Youth Leadership Project. They will talk about youth substance abuse, which is the topic of this month's Coalition Forum. (See story on page 2.)

May 5, 10:30 a.m.

Task Force to Support DSS Families

Follow-up meetings on our February forum topic, Supporting Families Who Are Engaged with the Department of Social Services, have developed into the creation of a task force to discuss this issue. The next meeting of the task force, re-scheduled from April 28th, will be in the Coalition conference room. For more information contact **Kathy Keeser** at the Coalition.

May 16, 12:00 p.m.

Preventing Teen Pregnancy

Our local teen pregnancy prevention initiative engaged Kim McMann to interview teen parents, and Lois Daunis to do a study of afterschool opportunities for middle school students. We hope information from these studies can help shape our teen pregnancy prevention programming for future years. Come share lunch with us, listen and talk with us about their findings. For information on venue, please contact **Al Bashevkin** at the Coalition office.

Annual Meeting of the Coalition

Friday, June 6

11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Please see enclosed flyer to register!

May 2008

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Lois Daunis: ldaunis@nbccoalition.org

Final Thoughts . . .

Listening to the radio yesterday, I drifted back forty years. I heard stories about student activism at Columbia University that began April 23, 1968. Mark Rudd was one of the leaders of the Columbia movement, and has since retired as a high school math teacher. NPR's Robert Siegel was an anchor at WKCR, Columbia University's radio station, in 1968 and was the chief source of information about what was occurring. He describes those times as a reporter's dream. He says, "*we tried to cover it as straight as we could, which meant some tense moments both with striking students and with the University administration. People praised us, people complained about us, but above all, people listened to us and they relied on us. For me, that was a first. It was also my first experience with chaos. All rules were violated. And in such chaos, all sorts of fantastic ideas gained credence. No exaggeration was off limits.*"

It's hard to leap from our April Coalition meeting to the activism of the 60's, but the passion made by students and adults for more responsible stewardship of our planet is a beginning. Ideas were flying during the April forum. Williams students demonstrated the potential for a greening industry to bridge economic differences we have in our region. MCLA students and faculty showed what they are doing to make their campus more environmentally responsible.

Hosting this meeting was a bit of a challenge. I was not certain people would show up for the meeting, or that we could have a cohesive theme. I had difficulty explaining what the meeting was about. Organizing the meeting was a bit chaotic as I was depending on, not the usual people who know the Coalition way, but rather people who had never been to a Coalition meeting and had ideas about what they wanted to do. My nagging question was, "would this discussion, no matter how important, fit into our work?"

Life is learning and here is what I learned from that experience. Just like the youth led chaos that fawned the creativity of the 60's, we have a similar process today. The issues of the 60's continue: war, the economy, and social justice, with an added issue today of the environment. As adults looking ahead, we've got to trust our future, our youth. My learning was my willingness and our board's willingness to trust this conversation to some new players. Sometimes we have to take those risks. Let's look to see where this may go.

--Al Bashevkin

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Northern Berkshire Community Coalition



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