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NEXT COALITION MEETING:

Caring for our Caregivers

Friday December 11

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



Mental Health Services for Children Proves Worthy as Topic of Community Discussion

The November nbCC monthly forum was long-anticipated by all of us who have been hearing word of the new Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI) in Massachusetts. This initiative developed following the “Rosie D. case,” in which families in Berkshire County sued the state with claims of ineffective and fragmented services provided to children and families with complex needs. The families won in court, and the result is a re-evaluation of services provided to families with great need. The meeting room at the First Baptist Church in North Adams filled with 63 community members interested in hearing about how CBHI will improve access to children’s mental health care and provide equity for children served by publicly funded health insurance.



L to R: Al Bashevkin, Jim Mucia, Kathy Gaspardi, Allison Graczykowski, and Jayne Bannish

The presentation was lead by Jim Mucia, Director of the Child and Adolescent Services Division of the Brien Center. Jim offered an overview of the CBHI plans, explaining that this will be a revolutionary way of providing mental health services for children. CBHI puts parents and their children in control; the families are empowered in deciding how their child’s services should proceed. Kathy Gaspardi, also from the Brien Center, spoke next to explain to community members about the wrap-around approach being used through CBHI, with the intention of keeping children in their own homes. The wrap-around approach involves a series of meetings with key players in the child’s life to develop a safety plan, leading to the creation of a Care Plan Team of professionals and family members who support the child. As the image it brings forth, wrap-around services provide community based resources in a variety of ways to help engage a broader section of the community in the child’s well being. CBHI is innovative, new, and complex in what it will offer for families in Berkshire County and beyond. For more information about this initiative, please visit www.mass.gov, and search for CBHI to find an outline of services. The Brien Center in Pittsfield offers a wide range of services in the Child and Adolescent Services Division; please also visit their website at www.briencenter.org. The Brien Center hosts Systems Of Care (SOC) meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, at 3:30 p.m., at 333 East Street in Pittsfield. SOC meetings are open community forums designed to help make the CBHI network of services result in positive mental health outcomes for children, and they invite the public to join and share your thoughts!

We hope you will join us for our next Coalition monthly forum, to be held on Friday, December 11, 10 a.m. to noon at the First Baptist Church in North Adams. Read about it on p.2!

-- Jenna Dickinson

**Your sponsorship advertisement could be here!
Call Al Bashevkin for rate inquiry.**



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 for Children & Families
- 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.

January Newsletter Deadline December 18, 2009

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!

December Coalition Meeting: Caring for our Caregivers

Please join us on **Friday, December 11** as we discuss Caring for our Caregivers at our monthly Coalition forum. Coalition monthly forums are a vehicle to address current issues. At the forum discussion about the challenges of caring for others, you can expect to hear from both those caring for family members in their own homes as well as those employed by community agencies that provide formal care to local residents. We will come to understand the common issues for caregivers whether it is their job or whether they are caring for a loved one as a volunteer, and we'll begin to develop a resource guide for caregivers by sharing information about community resources that can help. You will hear about how we can better support our caregivers, and help us all to consider next steps in this process.

We will begin, as always, with a round of introductions, followed by brief announcements of your upcoming events or new projects. Please do not forget to bring flyers about your announcements also, as there will be a display table for them in the middle of the meeting room. Childcare can be available for our meeting; please contact Liz Boland at the Coalition office by December 9th if you need it.

We hope to see you on **Friday, December 11, 10 a.m. to noon, at the First Baptist Church in North Adams.**

-- Al Bashevkin

NBYC Brings Back Youth Awards, Learns About New Tobacco Products

At the November NBYC meeting, members continued to discuss the significance of the 2009 Northern Berkshire Prevention Needs Assessment Survey results and began making plans for reviving the SAY It Proud awards, which had been on hiatus. SAY It Proud (SAY stands for Supporting and Acknowledging Youth) was a recognition award created by the NBYC a few years ago in response to the suggestion in the PNA results that youth don't feel recognized by adults in the community for positive actions. Any community member can nominate a young person for a SAY It Proud award. Awards will be presented four times a year at public community events. The first deadline for nominations is 1/5/10. For a nomination form, please visit nbccoalition.org/forms. You can nominate individuals or groups of young people ages 11 to 19 for participating in positive activities, making healthy choices, and/or working hard. For more information on the awards, please contact Kate Merrigan at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org or 663-7588.

At the December meeting, to be held on 12/2/09, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the nbCC conference room at 61 Main Street, Joan Rubel, Project Coordinator for the Northern Berkshire Tobacco-Free Community Partnership at Berkshire AHEC, will present timely information on emerging, non-cigarette tobacco products. Joan offers the following information on what to expect at this meeting: “The tobacco industry is always changing its tactics to get around new laws and regulations that are passed to restrict tobacco's influence on young people. Come to the December meeting of the NBYC to learn about new tobacco products that are on the market and attractive to teens—like candy-flavored dissolvable tobacco. Many of these new products are not easily recognizable as tobacco products. Learn about the current range of products that youth are using and how you can stay informed on this rapidly changing subject. Tobacco is a highly addictive substance; 90% of smokers start in their teens, when their brains are still in development, and these smokers will have a harder time quitting than those who start smoking later in life.”

-- Kate Merrigan

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Take Charge Will Host a Forum

On **Friday, December 4** at the First Baptist Church on Eagle Street (where the monthly nbCC forums take place), Take Charge will host a panel discussion from 10 a.m.-noon. Professors and students from MCLA and Williams College, local officials, and community leaders will lead a discussion on current environmental legislation and policy proceedings such as the MA Global Warming Solutions Act, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, and the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. All are welcome to attend!

Take Charge is a partner of the nbCC that is committed to making the homes of the Northern Berkshires more energy independent. Its work revolves around education, outreach, and action based in a community campaign made up of community members, colleges, schools, local government, businesses, and organizations. Please contact **Madeline** (msk1@williams.edu) or **Jaimie** (jw2606@mcla.edu) with any questions.

nbCC Seeks Community Outreach Workers

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition is seeking community minded individuals to take part in a Community Outreach Initiative. Eligible candidates must be committed to making positive change in the Northern Berkshires, assisting residents in finding resources, and an ability to think outside the box when organizing neighborhoods.

Outreach workers will be required to attend a two-hour, weekly training for fifteen consecutive weeks. A stipend and certificate of completion will be awarded to those who complete the training. Some paid outreach work will continue after completing the program.

No prior education or experience is necessary. Please send cover letters and resumes, **no later than December 30th**, to 61 Main Street Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247, or email to abenson@nbccoalition.org, ATTN Community Outreach. The nbCC is an equal opportunity employer.

-- Ashley Benson

After School Middle School Program Guide is Now Available

The youth workers of North County have joined forces to establish an online resource for parents of middle school youth seeking safe and substance free activities. The After School Middle School Program Guide provides a list of after school activities including name of organization, programs available, location, contact information, a description of activities/events offered, hours, and age appropriateness. Visit the Coalition website at www.nbccoalition.org and click on the After School Middle School Program Guide link for more information.

-- Lois Daunis

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(202) 456-2461 (fax)
president@whitehouse.gov

Martin Luther King Day Slated as "Day of Service" for 2010

The 2010 celebration of Martin Luther King Day will be a bit different than events in past years. While many of us consider this holiday to be a day off from work and other obligations to recall the life of a revolutionary man, this January



Above: Steve Green presents the Peacemaker Award at the 2009 MLK Day celebration, as Alex Daugherty and Rep. Dan Bosley look on

18th will instead bring an opportunity for a "day of service." There will be three or four projects happening that day, all concentrating on our basic needs with a specific focus on providing food, clothing, shelter, etc. to those in need. The event will take place at St. John's Parish Hall in North Adams, beginning at 9 a.m. with a potluck lunch to conclude

the day at 1 p.m. Those interested in learning more information about getting involved should call the Coalition office, **663-7588**, or contact **Shana Dixon** at sdixon@nbccoalition.org. We hope you will join us for a day of service as we celebrate the life and dedication of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.!

Mt. Greylock CMCA Will Continue Lecture Series @ MGRHS in January

A 4-part lecture series addressing the issues surrounding underage drinking is well underway this Winter in the meeting room at Mt. Greylock Regional High School, sponsored by Mt. Greylock CMCA (Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol). The goal is to bring to light some of the important issues regarding underage drinking as well as new research on the impact these issues have on our children and our communities. There have been two lectures in November, and two lectures are slated to be held in January.

The next lecture will be on **January 14**, and is entitled "Alcohol and Human Performance: Alcohol's Effect on the Body and It's Potential Consequences Relating to Athletic Performance." Our presenter will be Justin Moore, Assistant Professor of Physical Education and Head Coach of the Women's Crew Team at Williams College.

This 4-part series will culminate on **January 28** with a community forum which will include a panel of experts in the area of child psychology, addiction & law enforcement as well as parents, teenagers and others. This will give us all a chance to discover ways in which we can talk to our young children, teenagers and students about these very complex issues.

These lectures will include valuable information for parents, teachers, coaches and anyone who has or works with children. Please join us. For more information, please contact Mt. Greylock CMCA's Strategy Team Leader, **Odette Klass** at oklass@nbccoalition.org or call nbCC at **663-7588**.

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

Join the 2009 Friends of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

Twenty-three years ago the people of Northern Berkshire first came together to face the challenges in our community. We've come a long way, but we need to do more, and we need your help. Please become a financial supporter by joining the Friends of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition listed below. We understand that not everyone is able to make a financial contribution, but we also want you to know that no amount is too small to be helpful.

The 2009 Friends of the Coalition (as of December 1, 2009)

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Neighborhood Basketball: Berkshire Bank

Groove Hosts New Acts, Touring Bands



On November 10th, The Groove held its first weeknight show at St. John's Parish Hall in North Adams. Groovers are trying out weeknight shows this year as a way to attract touring bands in order to bring new music to the area. The 11/10 show, which drew an enthusiastic and energetic crowd, featured bands from Florida and Toronto, as well as local favorites and long-time Groove performers Reason 837. Coming up next, Groove will host a hardcore/punk show at St. John's Parish Hall on **Wednesday, December 2nd**. This show features a substantial slate of bands from Massachusetts and New York—Colony, Revenge, Think Again, Inhibition, and Crucial Times—as well as Expire, a Wisconsin-based band that is currently touring the northeast. Audience members can see all these bands, beginning at **6 p.m.**, for just \$8.

Youth Leaders Focus on Community Issues and Welcome Special Guests

November was an exciting month for the Youth Leadership Program, beginning with special surprise visits from two important community leaders on Tuesday, November 3rd. Representative Dan Bosley and Mayor John Barrett dropped in to talk with the group on the day of local and state elections. Mayor Barrett shared his thoughts on why he values serving as Mayor and Representative Bosley discussed the importance of voting. Participants and staff thank both elected officials for making time to chat with the group! Later in the same evening, the group reviewed a large list of community issues/needs that they had been compiling and narrowed down the list to a few key issues they would like to explore this year. Interestingly, this year's group is most interested in large-scale community development areas. Among the topics the group will be learning about and acting on are advocating for increased low-income housing in the community, the need for a skate park in North Adams, and the interest teenagers continually express in having a multi-purpose teen center in the community.



Above: Brandon, pictured here reading a poem during Teen Writing Workshop, is one of many teens this year who are in both TWW and the Barrington Stage Playwright Mentoring Project. Their Thursdays are full of artistic expression, as they head to PMP right after TWW.

Other UNITY Happenings Worth Noting:

*Also in November, the 5 UNITY SUPARs (Special UNITY Participatory Action Researchers) began meeting and received training on surveying the availability of tobacco products in Northern Berkshire retail establishments. Through December, the group will be visiting retailers and learning about how tobacco products are advertised and sold.

*The planning group for the 411 in the 413 Youth Conference has been meeting and is closing in on a date for this year's 4th conference for Berkshire high school students. Check out next month's newsletter for details on the conference!

*The Teen Writing Workshop is on a roll, with over 20 youth having participated in sessions in the month of November. Youth are encouraged to attend every week but are welcome to join at any time. The group meets on Thursday afternoons, 4pm-5:30pm, at the nbCC conference room at 61 Main Street in North Adams. For more info, contact Kate Merrigan at kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org or 663-7588.

-- Kate Merrigan & Robin Lehleitner

"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."

Recognizing Community Spirit

On October 27th a grand crowd representing a cross section of the Northern Berkshire community gathered to honor those receiving certificates of appreciation from Mayor John Barrett III at the Community Recognitions Ceremony at Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams. A community of family, friends and neighbors celebrated and thanked 33 individuals, 45 businesses and 7 groups, representing 130 volunteers for the various ways each one has contributed to building and supporting neighborhood and community spirit throughout the past year. Steve Green and Ashley Benson assisted the Mayor in presenting the awards. Among individuals nominated were Bella Richardson and David Strzepek from Adams for the volunteer hours they are giving to the new Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum. The many businesses included those that helped to support Neighborhood Basketball, National Night Out, the Neighborhood EXPO and local neighborhood events. The groups were a sampling of the many volunteers in our Northern Berkshire community who give so generously of themselves to others. Among them are college students from MCLA and Williams College. A big thank you to the ten young men from Pi Upsilon Pi at MCLA for helping with set up and clean up at this event, as well as at the Neighborhood EXPO!



Members of MCLA's Pi Upsilon Pi stand to receive their award from the Mayor

ALL RECIPIENTS ARE LISTED BELOW:

Individual Neighborly Acts: David Anderson, Jerry Baran, Bob Calway, Corinne Case, Jay Cooper, Dr. Emily DeMoor, Ernie & Burt Gamache, Kenna Hoellerich, Sue Hudak, Kathy Keeser, Maryanne Kufs, Anne & Neil Kupiec, Lisa LaBonte, Mary & Bob LaFleur, Dan Lester, Melissa & Bernard Martin, Joe Mazza, Jane Miller, Kellie Morrison, Jen Munoz, Ben Raimer, Paul Rinehart, Bella Richardson, Amy Ritcher, Bernie Roberts, Valerie Schwartz, Kathy Singer, Carol Stein-Payne, David Strzepek, Gerry Torres, Pete Wheeler, Julie Wojcik, and Sharon Wyrick.

Business/Agency Support: Adams Cooperative Bank, Big Y Foods, Bounty-Fare Restaurant, Christo's Famous Pizza, Crescent Creamery, Cup and Saucer, Equinox Farm, Freeman DeRosa & Rondeau, Greylock Club, Greylock Federal Credit Union, HA George & Sons, Hoosac Bank, I Got Goodies, IOKA Valley Farms, Isabella's Restaurant, Jack's Hot Dogs, Jaeschke's Orchards, Lakeview Orchards, Lampiasi Bakery, Mass MoCA, McDonald's, Northern Berkshire Creative Arts, Old Country Buffet, Papyri Books, The Party Place, Persnickety Toys, Price Chopper, Red Sauce Restaurant, Scarafoni Associates, Shamrock Aviation, SBM Insurance, Smith, Watson & Co., South Adams Savings Bank, Stop & Shop, Target Stores, The Hub Restaurant, Village Pizza, Walmart, Where'd You Get That, Williams College Food Dept., & YMCA.

Groups Pulling Together: Board of Missions at First Baptist Church; Kappa Delta Phi National Affiliated Sorority – Kappa Omicron, and Pi Upsilon Pi Fraternity at MCLA; ***DownStreetArt:*** Sue Abrams, Jane Campbell, BFAIR, Jon Dinerstein, Brittney Dono, Sue Elias, Sue Walker & Steve Green, Chris Gutierrez, Patrick Hernandez, Matt Hopkins, Diana Kawzak, Brandy LaBelle, Carolyn Leab, Donna Musche, Lauren O'Neal, Marci Plumb, Andrea Peters, Ron Sheldon, Youlin Shi, Dan Soha, Rose Marie Thomas, Donna Thomas, Gracie Vincent & Ruth Yarter; ***Neighborhood Basketball:*** Al Bashevkin, Mike Boland, AJ Bostwick, Alex Daugherty, Ray LaBombard, Rick LaCosse, Rickey LaCosse, Ed LaCosse, Chris McDonald, Kevin Meehan & Brian Neff; ***St. John's Kitchen:*** Diane Bleau, Lisa Allen & Family, Erica Beauchemin, Bob Blair, Judy & Charlie Blaisdell, Dot Bliss, Janet Brian, Laura Brown, Bob, Trevor & Travis Ciempa, Sue & Brad Columbus, Donna Columbus, Barb, Brodie & Austin Cooper, Aja & Zoe Daugherty, Horace & Priscilla Greenlaw, Tracy, Gregory & Naomi Parsons, Jack & Andrea Hockridge, Cathy & Jas Howe, Fr. Edward King, Tammy LaValley, Lee Leonesio, Mark & Joyce Lincourt, Richie & Jessica Lincourt, Elsie Manson, Steve & Pat McConnell, Tammy, Rick & Amanda Moon, Marlene Moon, Lou & Gladys Morin, Lois Nelson, Marissa Parker, Mary Robert, Gay & Fred Scarborough, Jeff Siam, Corinne, Ahren, Audrey & Michael Tatro, Bob, Tammy & Nicholas Thayer, Shannon, Chase & Payton Vanderwoude, Janet Wheeler & Beth Zoito; ***Sundays @ 6:*** Paula Consolini, Joe Finnegan, Mikki Brown, Amanda Darling, Suzanne Dewey, Zach Evans, Judy Giamborino, Michele Geitz, Sidhant Mehra, Jeff Putnam, Margo Sanger, Rob Santore, Patrice Smith & Jill Strawbridge.

The Coalition thanks those who took the time to make these recommendations!

-- Ashley Benson, Natalie Cain & Tim Briggs

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 phone 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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First Fridays @ First Baptist Church North Adams

On the first Friday of every month, you will notice delicious smells coming from the kitchen of First Baptist Church North Adams, as different boards and committees prepare a monthly homemade meal to serve to the public. Proceeds help to support local mission efforts and our outreach ministry at Camp Ashmere. For good times, delicious food, and reasonable prices, come to a First Friday dinner at First Baptist and invite a friend. Hours: 5:00-7:00 p.m. Please use the Eagle Street Entrance. For more information, call **663-3780**. **Friday, December 4th** Menu: Stuffed chicken breast, vegetable, and potato with gravy, rolls and butter, desserts, and beverages. Adults, \$8; children under 12, \$4.

Youth Center, Inc. To Host Make-It Take-It Craft Fair

Youth Center Inc.'s Make-It-Take-It Children's Craft Fair will be held on **Saturday, December 5th, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at 20 East Street in Adams**. Projects include fleece pillows, toy soldiers, clay stepping stones, holiday ornaments, snowmen, and wreaths. Prices for the crafts range from free to \$5.00. Two special guests this year are Santa and Rudolph, arriving at 11:00 a.m. The craft fair will feature a Zhu Zhu Pet raffle! Mr. Squiggles & Pipsqueak, along with a giant family fun house will be raffled together. Tickets are two for \$1.00 and fifteen for \$5.00. Zhu Zhu Pets are the "hottest toy of the season." Call **Liz Baker**, Executive Director, at **743-3550** for more information.

Northern Berkshire Center for the Arts Suspends Operations

Northern Berkshire Center for the Arts (NBCA), a non-profit community art school founded in 2003, has suspended operations as of November 30 and is going on hiatus. This decision was made in response to the challenges of the present economy. They moved out of their facility in Heritage State Park at the end of November, after the fall art classes had finished. While on hiatus, the Board of Directors will be reviewing the school's strategic plan and considering its options for future operations and programming. Please visit www.nbarts.org for future information.

National Alliance on Mental Illness Collects Items for Local Hospital

Again this year, NAMI-BC is planning to collect items for the local hospital psychiatric wards at Berkshire Medical Center and North Adams Regional Hospital that will be distributed to both locations next month for the holidays. We have been in contact with the staff at these hospitals to find out what items would be most appreciated and these are some of the suggestions for donations that will go into patient gift bags: note paper, pens, socks, playing cards, games, puzzles, pocket calendars, hats, gloves, soaps, shampoo & conditioner, nail polish, candy, and flip flops. NAMI will also be collecting clothing, and we invite you to drop off new or used clothing in good condition; the larger sizes are most needed, from coats and active wear to undergarments. Other useful items are magazine or newspaper subscriptions, movies, and hard cover books. If anyone is interested in volunteering to pack these gift bags or to transport everything to the hospital, please let the NAMI staff know by calling **(413) 443-1666**. As always, monetary donations are gratefully accepted and checks can be made out to NAMI-BC. All items can be dropped off at the **NAMI Office, Monday-Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**

nbCC Has Office Space Available For Rent

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition has a small office space available for rent, effective immediately. If interested, please contact **Al Bashevkin** at **663-7588** for more information.

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

Wordplay @ Papyri Books

December is the final month that Wordplay will be co-sponsored by Inkberry and Papyri Books, but despite the end of Inkberry as a formal organization, Wordplay, and many other programs conceived by the organization, will live on. Held the **second Saturday of each month at 7 p.m.**, Wordplay hosts a guest author each month, followed by refreshments, Open Mic and a visit to Papyri Gallery to see the work of local artists. Our featured authors for December are the North County contributors to *upstreet #5*, a Berkshire County literary journal. Papyri Gallery continues to feature the work of local artist Joel Rudnick. Open Mic is an opportunity for guests to share their written works-in-progress and five minutes is allotted for each reader. Join us **Saturday, December 12 at 7 p.m., Papyri Books, 45 Eagle Street, North Adams**. For more information please call **662-2099**. This event is free and open to the public.

REACH Gives Thanks to Those Who Helped With Gardens

REACH would like to say a big THANK YOU to all the individuals and agencies that made the garden programs successful this year: Neighborhood Leaders and neighbors, Housing Authorities and Property Managers, North Adams Public Schools including the Off-Campus Program and STEP Program, Northern Berkshire Neighbors and UNO, Youth Center Inc, Sharon Wyrick, Adams Middle School 6th grade students and teachers, Adams Council on Aging, MCLA's Elena Traister and her students, the Berkshire Food Project kitchen staff, Angelica Peredes at 4-H, Kidspace Mona Lisa Project, REACH interns, and the NARH facilities management team. We couldn't have done it without you, and we look forward to working with you in 2010!

Northern Berkshire Healthcare Offers CPR Classes

Northern Berkshire Healthcare has scheduled two Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes in December at the VNA & Hospice of Northern Berkshire Community Room. Both classes are Basic Life Support Healthcare Provider level. The classes are intended for healthcare professionals or students who need a Healthcare Provider level certification. Classes are scheduled for **Saturday, December 12, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Thursday, December 17, from 5 to 9 p.m.** The course is approved by the American Heart Association. The cost of the class is \$65, which covers the cost of instruction, the student workbook, and certification card. For more information or to register, please call **413-664-5404**.

DCF To Host Third MAPP Training for Foster Parents

The Department of Children and Families has successfully completed two Mapp trainings in Berkshire County. One of the groups was held at the North Adams Public Library and the other was in Pittsfield at the area office. These families will be homestudied and available for placement by the holidays. The North Adams foster parent support group is officially up and running and has been very successful. We will be holding another training for foster parents in January and are currently looking for families that are interested. Please call **Lori Kays** at **413-236-1815**.

Information From Northern Berkshire Tobacco-Free Partnership

New research shows that smokers want to quit and that those who have access to free medications and counseling are more likely to quit for good. In impressive numbers, low-income smokers in Massachusetts have taken advantage of the MassHealth insurance benefit providing access to medicine and counseling. The result is a 26% decline in smoking rates over 2.5 years. Within only one year, users of the benefit had dramatic reductions in hospitalizations for heart attacks, declines in emergency and clinic visits for asthma, and a significant decrease in acute birth complications. For more information, contact the Northern Berkshire Tobacco-Free Partnership at jrubel@berkshireahec.org and see News at www.makesmokinghistory.org.

Northern Berkshire Faith Institutions and Leaders

Adams

First Baptist Church 15 Commercial St. 743-5680
Pastor Donald E. Gray
First Congregational 42 Park Street 743-1677
Rev. Mike Mullany
Pope John Paul The Great Parish 21 Maple Street
Rev. Daniel J. Boyle 743-1767
St. Mark's Episcopal P.O. Box 191 743-0947
Rev. Ellen White

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 Mallory Rd 458-1083
Pastor Joseph D. Slonski

North Adams

Northern Berkshire Christian Church
55 Harding Ave. 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. Allen M. Comstock
First United Methodist 134 Main Street 664-9655
Pastor Kim Kie
Jehovah's Witness 984 Union Street 663-5030
St. Andrews Episcopal 1438 Mass Avenue 662-2775
Rev. Peter Pierson
St. Elizabeth's of Hungary 68 Marshall 663-5316
Rev. William Cyr
St. John's Episcopal 59 Summer Street 664-9656
Rev. Edward King
Salvation Army 393 River Street 663-7987
Lts. Russell & Cynthia Crowzen

Savoy

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

(continued on page 10)

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

Happy Holidays! ~ The nbCC Staff

December 11, 10:00 a.m.

Coalition Monthly Forum

Join us for the December monthly forum of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The discussion will be about "Caring For Our Caregivers." 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.

December 15, 6:00 p.m.

Foster Family Connections

Foster Family Connections meets on the third Tuesday of each month at St. John's Parish Hall in North Adams. The time allows for foster parents to connect with one another over a topic or activity. At the December meeting, foster parent Tina Rotolo will set up a holiday kitchen to make chocolate pops and candies. Families interested in attending should contact **Natalie Cain** at **663-7588** or **ncain@nbccoalition.org**.

January 11, 12:00 p.m.

Neighborhood Summit

Please join your neighbors in the conference room at the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition in an opportunity for community leadership. We'll talk about community issues, and problem solve together. The public is welcome. Summit meetings are typically held the first Monday of each month, but the January Summit will not follow this schedule. Please call **Ashley** at **663-7588** for information.

SAVE THE DATE

January 18, 2010

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day!
"DAY OF SERVICE"**

9 a.m. - 1 p.m., with potluck
lunch to follow

December 16, 5:30 p.m.
(Adams)

January 19, 7:00 p.m.
(Mt. Greylock)

CMCA Strategy Team Meetings

Adams Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (AMCA) and Mt. Greylock Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (MGMCA) are grassroots initiatives to reduce teenagers' access to alcohol. Strategy teams made up of local citizens meet monthly to guide project priorities and actions. For the Adams team, contact **Corinne Case** at **743-7455** or **ccase@nbccoalition.org**. For the Mt. Greylock team, contact **Odette Klass** at **458-5287** or **oklass@nbccoalition.org**. For information about the CMCA program, call or email **Jenna Dickinson**, Prevention Coordinator at the Coalition office, **663-7588** or **jcece@nbccoalition.org**.

December 4, 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 December meeting, the group will hear from Joan Rubel from the Northern Berkshire Tobacco-Free Partnership of Berkshire AHEC about emerging, non-cigarette tobacco products on the market now. To get on the group's e-mail list, contact **Kate Merrigan** at **kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org**.

December 7, 7:30 p.m.

December 11, 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 Al and Scott will discuss Caring for our Caregivers with their guests Barbara Cece, a caregiver for her parents, and Cynthia Costello of Elder Services.

February 5, 10:00 a.m.
(note: 1st Friday!)

Meet The New Mayor

Please join the Coalition and community members in conversation with the new Mayor of North Adams, Dick Alcombright. This meeting will be the Coalition Monthly Forum for February, and will be held at the **First Baptist Church in North Adams, at the corner of Eagle and Main streets.** Use the Eagle Street entrance.

December 2009

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Final Thoughts . . .

An era has ended. Our organization, the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition began in 1986, at the time that the manufacturing based economy of the Northern Berkshire region was leaving the area. The high unemployment rate surprised everyone, and there was little thought for what was next. Worst of all, a region-wide emotional depression set in. Perhaps we deserved what was happening to the region. Perhaps Northern Berkshire was destined for its own demise.

When nbCC began, John Barrett had already been Mayor of North Adams for two years. He got to know us early on as the Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition, a group that worked to help the region's services come together to help those out of work. At one of our first public meetings with Mayor Barrett, we talked about homelessness, and the Mayor committed city resources to help us in our quest to document the issues and eventually build a homelessness prevention and shelter network for Northern Berkshire County.

I appreciate Mayor Barrett's determination to help the folks in our region believe in themselves. He would not allow the region to get down on itself and he fought hard for what he believed the region needed. In our work, Mayor Barrett was most supportive of our neighborhood initiatives, community recognition, and our presence and approach in the community. After all, recognizing the good things that happen is one step in overcoming depression, and this all begins with families and the neighborhoods they live in.

Mayor Barrett is leaving the City of North Adams in a better place than it was in 1986. His legacy continues as Mayor-elect Alcombright prepares to take charge of North Adams. Thank you, Mayor Barrett, for believing in the people of North Adams. Mayor-elect Alcombright certainly shares your belief in and love for the people of North Adams. His presence in the meetings and gatherings of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition are one example of his community commitment.

Change of this magnitude is never easy. I know that there were two clear sides to this election. Just like a Red Sox - Yankees series, when the match is over the sides shake hands and get on to the important business of the day. It's time to honor the legacy of Mayor Barrett and welcome our Mayor-elect, Dick Alcombright. The people of North Adams deserve no less.

--Al Bashevkin

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Northern Berkshire Community Coalition



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