

Inside the Summer 2010 issue

Goodbye to Natalie Cain.....	2
NBCC Job Available.....	3
Interfaith Action Initiative.....	4
Program News.....	6-7
Coalition Calendar.....	8
Rotolo Wins Award.....	8
Community Bulletin Board.....	9-11
Final Thoughts.....	12

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

Coalition

An update from

news



Summer 2010, Volume XXIV, Number 10

May Coalition Forum Addresses Teen Pregnancy



▲ Forum Planning Committee members, Kim Pikul, Noelle Murphy, Jeanna Tinney, Katrina Mattson, Kate Merrigan, Jennifer Muñoz, Becky Krysiak, and Sandy Kolis.

Fifty-eight people attended the May Coalition Forum addressing the topic of Teen Pregnancy. Facilitated by Kate Merrigan, this forum offered perspectives from many working with teen parents as well as teen parents themselves. Listening to the forum, I was reminded of the complexity of the issue of teen pregnancy.

Kate Merrigan led a planning process for the meeting that brought together a number of women who had their own perspectives to share about teen pregnancy. Kate offered data from the Department of Public Health about local teen birth rates. Current rates are lower. In fact, what is happening in Northern Berkshire follows a national trend in lower teen birth rates. From 1996 to 2008, teen birth rates have dropped by 28%. Three quarters of teen births are from parents 17-19 years old. There appears to be a trend of fewer teen births to younger teens. Kim Pikul talked of the teens that she sees in her role as a counselor for the Corporation

for Public Management. Of those teens, a surprising number of teen moms planned their pregnancies, and many have already dropped out of school. Sandy Kolis works in the Young Parents Program of Child Care of the Berkshires and she works with young moms who are under twenty years old, helping them find childcare so they can finish their education. Sandy reported that finding jobs for young parents is very difficult. Becky Krysiak works with the Healthy Families Program of Child Care of the Berkshires and they stay with families until the child is three years old. She is finding older teen parents in her program and commented that the families that she serves want help. Jennifer Muñoz is a reproductive health educator who also works at REACH. She noted that teen pregnancy is often tied to family trauma. Noelle Murphy coordinated the teen pregnancy prevention efforts through the North Adams Public School and helped to implement curricula that teaches skills to young people

to help prevent pregnancies. Katrina Mattson is the Health Services Manager for Tapestry Health and talked about the lack of understanding that young women she sees have of how their bodies work. Ben Shiner brought up concern about the dads whose roles are very confusing. And we heard from Jeanna Tinney who has worked her way through school and successfully raised a child as a teen mom.

Hearing those that work with teen parents talk about the issue, was easy. Processing this information to help our teens is more difficult. I liked what Jennifer Muñoz said. She said that “teen pregnancy is not just about prevention, but at some point it’s also about compassion.” When a baby comes into our world, it’s up to all of us to make sure that baby has the opportunities needed to be successful. When we talked about cultural norms, we noticed that there is no universal attitude about teen parents. Some are very accepting. Others show lots of disapproval. We’re divided. And lots of teens feel this strife.

Nina Garlington of Berkshire United Way talked about a county wide teen pregnancy prevention federal initiative that the United Way is facilitating. Let’s hope that it works. The application is due the first week in June.

Someone late in the meeting offered the following quote from Gloria Steinem, which I have adapted to say “we should give birth to ourselves before we give birth to another human being.” The quote makes sense, but after hearing the discussion at this forum, I realize it’s a lot more complicated.

~ Al Bashevkin

**nbCC Thanks
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Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

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.

September Newsletter Deadline
August 20, 2010

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

Natalie Cain to retire after 17 years at NBCC



▲ Natalie Cain says goodbye

We are going to miss Natalie at the Coalition office as she heads for her retirement/regrouping period of life. For seventeen years, we have been blessed with her presence at the Coalition. We have seen Natalie find beauty in the most difficult places, and know that she has affected the lives of many. We are lucky that she is choosing to stay in the Northern Berkshire region and I believe (and hope) that we have not seen the last of Natalie Cain. But it is time for her to move to the next phase of her life.

No one can say goodbye as well as she said it at our Annual Meeting. Below is an excerpt of her talk. – Al Bashevkin

I am Natalie Cain, a native child of the Northern Berkshires, who grew up in a time when every neighborhood had a school, downtowns were bustling, stores were always busy, factories were producing goods and jobs were pretty much available to anyone who wanted to work.

I am Natalie Cain, SSJ, a Sister of St. Joseph who attended St. Joseph’s School from elementary through high school, in a time when community was vibrantly alive and schools were the hub of the community and the community was involved in so many ways with the school.

In the early 90’s through my outreach work at St. Francis, I was about gathering people to get to know their neighbors and find ways to watch out for and care for one another. It was at this time that I called together a team. Our first big learning experience was to attend an UNO Neighborhood meeting at the Salvation Army. We socialized over a potluck supper, sang around the piano, and talked with one another about concerns and plans for activities that would bring neighbors together. A few months later I was asked to consider a part-time position as a Neighborhood Development Specialist.

Truth to tell, as I reflect back, the job came to me to serve as a wonderful catalyst for my own development as a person, a human being living in a time of great social shifting in the world at

large, in our nation and in our Northern Berkshire Community.

When I came on board to help develop Northern Berkshire Neighbors, there was no clear model or plan, not even an office. We were to create the path by walking it. Going where people were, listening, connecting, and getting to know the neighbors and the community and creating pathways for intermingling in all sorts of ways, were the steps we took.

What I want to say to all of you here is thank you for the opportunity to come back to this area as a Sister of St. Joseph and work among you and with you these past seventeen years.

New initiatives such as the Community Outreach Workers are on the horizon. We are a northern Berkshire neighborhood garden. Our soil is healthy. We are well rooted. Our varieties are increasing. The changing horizon beckons us to keep on growing.

I am Natalie Cain, a Northern Berkshire Neighbor, who believes our community is drawing to itself many people who recognize this place as home. The new community we are creating together shows signs of great vibrancy and promise. I am happy to think of myself as one of the mothers of Northern Berkshire Neighbors and thank you from the bottom of my heart for allowing me to grow my love in your soil.

May peace be in your hearts.

NBCC Program Coordinator Job Available

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition is looking for a special person to work as the Program Coordinator for Northern Berkshire Neighbors. This full time position, (with great benefits), is for someone who loves communities, understands how they work, and has the energy to make them thrive. Working with staff and volunteers of the nbCC, this person will support a wide variety of community and neighborhood organizations, some existing, and others waiting to form.. Support for families within our community is key, and this position will support a variety of family systems. Familiarity and an affinity for community organizing are important as well as comfort in working with diverse groups. Flexibility in scheduling, including some evening

and weekend times is required. This position will oversee our Community Outreach Program, supervising current Outreach Workers and coordinating training for future Outreach Workers. The Program Coordinator for Northern Berkshire Neighbors will have staff and volunteers to assist with all of the above.

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition is an Equal Opportunity Employer. A full job description is located on the Coalition website, www.nbccoalition.org. To apply, please send your resume, a list of references, and a letter explaining your interest and qualifications for the position by July 12 to: Al Bashevkin, Executive Director, nbCC, 61 Main Street, Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247.

Summer Neighborhood Basketball to Begin

The Northern Berkshire Summer Neighborhood Basketball League is set to begin. Thanks to the leadership of Alex Daugherty and Tim Briggs, the support from the City of North Adams, Northern Berkshire YMCA, and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition and the financial support from the Berkshire Bank, Greylock Federal Credit Union, and Hoosac Bank, our basketball league will be active Tuesdays and Thursday evenings during the month of July. Coaches from Greylock Valley, Brayton Hill, UNO, Mohawk

Forest and the Hilltowns will bring together boys and girls aged 9-16 for our Junior and Senior division teams. The younger age group (9-12) will play from 6-7 and the older age group (13-16) will play from 7-8 each Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Each player will have a t-shirt to represent the teams they are playing for. In the event of rain, the Northern Berkshire YMCA will be available for the games.

To register a child for this non-competitive league, contact Liz Boland at the Coalition office, (413) 663-7588.

Trends in Youth Tobacco Use

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health released a report recently that shows that the number of high school students who smoke dropped to its lowest level, 16%, in FY09. That good news, however, is offset by the emergence of a dangerous trend: an increase in young people's use of smokeless tobacco and other tobacco products. Use of other tobacco products by high school students was higher than the rate of cigarette

smoking at 17.6% and growing. Review the report, "Trends in Youth Tobacco Use in Massachusetts, 1993-2009, at http://makesmokinghistory.org/en_US/news/54/56/Patrick-Murray-Administration-Announces-Drop-in-Youth-Smoking-Rate-at-Kick-Butts-Day-Event.html. Youth who use tobacco are more likely to engage in other risky behaviors; to prevent youth from using tobacco, see: http://makesmokinghistory.org/en_US/youth.html

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition Board of Directors

July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

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Northern Berkshire Legislative Contacts

Representative Dan Bosley
61 Main Street, Room 241
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 663-7486

Rep.DanielBosley@hou.state.ma.us

Representative Denis Guyer
12 Depot Street, Dalton, MA 01226
(413) 684-0033
denis.guyer@state.ma.us

Senator Benjamin Downing
20 Bank Row, Room 202
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-4008
benjamin.downing@state.ma.us

Congressman John Olver
78 Center St, Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-0946
Contact: Jason Ostrander

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317 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington DC 20510
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One Financial Plaza
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president@whitehouse.gov

Interfaith Action Initiative to Meet in July

The Interfaith Action Initiative has held two well-attended and dynamic meetings, and participants are discerning long-term community needs they may fill.

The next meeting of the initiative will be held on Friday, July 16, at 10:30 a.m. at the First Baptist Church in North Adams. (Use the Eagle Street entrance).

In addition, the Initiative is planning to present a drumming circle, led by local musician Otha Day at the North Adams Downtown Celebration on Wednesday, August. 25. This will be an outreach effort and information about the Initiative will be available.

At the June 18 meeting of the Initiative, the discussion centered around community needs we possibly could fill. These included finding a centralized space available one or two days a week for the work of the Family Life Support Center.

Another possible area for service would be youth mentoring. Work with, or along the lines of, Big Brothers Big Sisters was discussed. One meeting participant suggested mentoring gay and lesbian youth, as they often feel particularly isolated and alone; this person also mentioned that there's a need for mentoring for youth between the ages of 18 to 23 or so.

A third possible area would be provision of emergency housing for those men and women who cannot fit in at the Lousion House in Adams. These would be people on the fringe of our community, possibly recently released from incarceration. One participant asked whether an intermediate step could be creation of a kind of "social services hub" at a fixed location to help such people.

We also discussed the role of silent prayer and possibly faith sharing at our meetings.

At our July 16 meeting we will discuss our plans for the Downtown Celebration and each of the above service possibilities in more detail. Everyone is welcome to attend and bring their ideas.

The Interfaith Action Initiative grew out of the April forum of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, at which those present discussed the intersection of faith and community issues. All people of good will are welcome to participate in the Initiative.

For more information, e-mail northernberkshireinterfaith@gmail.com; visit <http://northernberkshireinterfaith.blogspot.com> or call the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition at (413) 663-7588.

Strategy Teams Make Great Strides in N. Berkshire

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol, a program of the Coalition, has been going strong this year! We have two very active Strategy Teams – one in Adams (AMCA) and one that spans the Mt. Greylock School District (MGM-CA). Adams Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol hosted a student assembly at Hoosac Valley High School on the effects of alcohol and other substances on the developing brain, and a parent meeting at C. T. Plunkett Elementary School on how to talk with your children, at various ages and stages, about alcohol and drugs. Mt. Greylock Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol hosted a 3-part lecture series addressing issues surrounding underage drinking – the effects of

underage drinking on the developing brain, on athletic performance, and on social development.

Both teams have been a presence at community events, and created a social marketing campaign that has included billboards, the distribution of jelly bracelets, Frisbees and pens. They have also supported After Prom and After Graduation events at the high schools. Volunteers have spent countless hours planning and getting the message out that we want our kids to make healthy and safe choices.

Members that join these organizations come from all walks of life - parents, community members, school officials,

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

youth workers, members of law enforcement, liquor establishment owners – anyone who understands that underage drinking is an issue in our community and wants to be part of the solution. For information about monthly strategy team meetings, contact Corinne Case at ccase@nbccoalition.org for AMCA; contact Sally Sussman at s.suss@verizon.net for MGMCA. For more information about Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, contact Lois Daunis at lداunis@nbccoalition.org.

What is WIC?

WIC is a nutrition program that provides nutrition and health education, healthy food and other services free of charge to Massachusetts families who qualify. WIC stands for Women, Infants and Children.

WIC is for all kinds of families; married and single parents, working or not working. If you are a father, mother, stepparent, grandparent, foster parent or other legal guardian of a child under 5, you can apply for WIC for your child.

You are automatically income eligible for WIC if you are currently receiving TAFDC, Food Stamps (SNAP) or MassHealth. (MassHealth members with Family Assistance or CommonHealth coverage are not automatically income eligible). Foster kids under 5 are also automatically eligible for WIC.

Noncitizens can get WIC. All noncitizens, including undocumented noncitizens, who meet the eligibility requirements, can get WIC benefits. No one from WIC will ask about your immigration status. Getting WIC benefits will not make you a public charge and will not hurt your chances of becoming a legal permanent resident.

Please call your local WIC office to see if you are eligible. In North Adams, please call (413) 663-3012. In Pittsfield, please call (413) 445-9429.

Your household income must be less than or equal to the income limits below:

**WIC Gross Income Eligibility Guidelines
2010**

People in Household	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$20,036	\$1670	\$386
2	\$26,955	\$2247	\$519
3	\$33,874	\$2823	\$652
4	\$40,793	\$3400	\$785
5	\$47,712	\$3976	\$918
6	\$54,631	\$4553	\$1051
7	\$61,550	\$5130	\$1184
8	\$68,469	\$5706	\$1317
Each additional person	+\$6,919	+\$577	+\$134

If you are pregnant, you should count yourself as two.

Note: These income limits are equal to 185% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#).

It's Time to Take the Pledge!

It's that time of year again when we will be sending the Safe Homes of North Berkshire pledge out to parents and guardians of youth in North County schools for the 2010-2011 school year. Safe Homes of North Berkshire is a network of parents who pledge that they will be at home when their teens have parties and that they will not allow the illegal use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco at teen parties in their home or on their property. Many parents feel that "they are the only ones" who want a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment for their children and feel uncomfortable talking to other parents and to youth about their concerns. Research shows that parents who set clear rules, monitor their teens' activities, and provide a safe environment greatly lower the risk that their children will be involved in using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

So, get an early start! Fill out the pledge below and send it to: Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, Attn: Safe Homes, 61 Main Street, Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247. Contact Lois Daunis at the Coalition for more information: lداunis@nbccoalition.org

— — — — —

Parent Pledge Please print clearly!

I, _____
(Parent name – please print clearly)

I, _____
(Parent name – please print clearly)

...would like to have my name added to this year's list of North Berkshire SAFE HOMES parents and realize that by doing so, I am agreeing that:

*** 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.**

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Grade levels of your children: _____

YLP Wraps Its 5th Year!

Fifteen teenagers completed UNITY's 5th year of our Youth Leadership Program (YLP). This demanding, 30-week community service-learning program required over 60 hours of participation and service from the diverse groups of young people. Congratulations to all of our participating youth, particularly those who we have to say goodbye to: graduating seniors Dana McIntosh, Britany Shepard, and Aubry Tessier as well as departing exchange student Urooj Javed. We'll miss you all!



YLP Partners with MoCA on Skatepark Campaign

As you've probably read here in the newsletter, the Youth Leadership Program has spent this year researching and advocating for the construction of a skateboard park in North Adams. This summer, a subcommittee from YLP will be working in partnership with MASS MoCA to pursue funding for a park that is both skateable and a work of public art.

The subcommittee's principal task is preparing an application for the Pepsi Refresh Everything contest, a competition in which individuals and organizations submit grant proposals to the Pepsi website and winners are determined by online popular vote. They will pursue Pepsi's largest award: a \$250,000 grant that would finance a modest but professional-quality park. The success of their application will hinge on the committee's ability to publicize and popularize their idea; you'll likely see them out and about this summer drumming up community support (and online votes!) for their application.

If you would like to contribute to or volunteer for the skatepark project, please contact Emily Baker-White or Kate Merrigan at (413) 663-7588 or by email at ebakerwhite@nbccoalition.org or kmerrigan@nbccoalition.org. You'll be hearing from the group over the summer as they ask you to vote for the skatepark once a day, every day, throughout August. You can find them on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=128963863792041&ref=ts>, follow them on Twitter (NAskateableart), read about their progress on the Coalition and MoCA websites, and see them on the streets promoting this fabulous initiative that will provide an aesthetically and athletically valuable asset to our city. Please vote throughout August to support these admirable young people in their service to our city.

UNITY SUPARs Using Photography to Explore Outsider Identity

Over the past few months, the SUPARs (Special UNITY Participatory Action Researchers) have been learning about and practicing numerous methods of collecting social science/public health research. The group has been interested throughout in researching the experiences of people who might feel like "outsiders" in the community—be it because of class, education level, sexual orientation, personal style, or any other reason. The group decided that they would like to further research the experience of outsiders through photography. Expect to hear more about this over the summer, including opportunities to see the photographs that the group produces.

Youth Collaborative Wraps Productive Year

In June, 8 members of the Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative met to share program news and discuss the questions being used on the 2011 Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. It was the final meeting of a good year that saw the group covering service-learning, COTY service work in Haiti, QPR first response for suicide individuals, youth anxiety issues, and more. The group takes the summer off and then reconvenes on Wednesday, September 8th, at 11am at the nbCC office.



▲ Unity members gather at the May Crooked Dance.

UNITY Youth Rock Crooked Dance

A group of UNITY participants went on a special trip to the Crooked dance in Pittsfield on May 14th. The dance, which was held at Jae's Spice and sponsored by the Live Out Loud Youth Project, was a community-based prom equivalent for youth who identify as GLBTQQA (gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, and straight allies). The group who went raved about how much fun the dance was. For more information on the Pittsfield-based Live Out Loud Youth Project for GLBTQQA youth, look them up on facebook or email kellyheck@affirmativecounseling.net.

“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.”

Note: In April, nine Community Outreach Workers completed their initial training. Each will be featured in future issues.

Community Outreach Worker Profile: Dan Soha

Dan Soha has recently come to refer to himself as the “Man on the Street.” As a Community Outreach Worker, his area is out and about the town as he travels by foot.

“I’m a person who in my travels through the streets sees many people. When I see someone who could use help or assistance, I carry a message of hope. One day I helped a man who was having difficulty crossing the street. We chatted a bit and I handed him a copy of the Northern Berkshire Services Directory, explaining what was in it. He found something he really needed and thanked me for sharing the information.”

Dan frequently has dinner at the Berkshire Food Project where he finds many occasions to chat with people and pass on helpful information. People appreciate any encouragement and though he may not know the actual outcome of his help, Dan knows that he is an instrument of compassion and caring.

It was Dan’s own job search that led him to this work. Laid off due to slow down in production, Dan, who lives in Adams, frequently comes into North Adams, looking for work. Without a car, he walks to places often with his guitar over his shoulder. Last summer, Dan agreed to volunteer for Down Street Art. During the slow times he played his guitar on the street. His congenial personality and helpful offers to assist wherever he can, endear him to many.

One day he noticed a sign about outreach worker training and came in to check it out. He applied and attended the 15-week training.

“Being unemployed provided me a window of time to get to know more about the community and how we can outreach to one another. Not having a car has given me the opportunity to walk and see people in a new way. I am learning skills in communication and organizing. I find this work both an honor and a privilege.”

Dan and Outreach worker Corinne Case are working on “Tuesdays at Stone Soup,” their first project in Adams, designed to provide space and time for unemployed people to make connections, meet new people, share resources and support one another. Sessions begin Tuesday, June 29 at Stone Soup, 27 Park St. in Adams from 3:00 to 4:30.



▲ Dan Soha, “Man on the Street”

Wanted

Northern Berkshire Neighbors Program Coordinator

The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition is looking for a special person to work as the Program Coordinator for Northern Berkshire Neighbors. Visit the Coalition website, www.nbcoalition.org for a full job description. The nbCC is an EOE. To apply, please send your resume, a list of references, and a letter explaining your interest and qualifications for the position by July 12 to: Al Bashevkin, Executive Director, nbCC, 61 Main Street, Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247

Looking for work? You are not alone.

Tuesdays at Stone Soup begins June 29th at 27 Park St. Adams, MA from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Come to meet new people with common interests and concerns, support each other, share information, network, and get resources from Community Outreach Workers.

This is a 4-week program to enjoy refreshments and good company. Join us on June 29th, July 6th, 13th and 20th. Call the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition to register: (413) 663-7588.

Community Connections: Nurturing Children and Families

On June 15, Foster Family Connections held its last meeting for the year at St. John’s Church. The Foster Parents thanked Natalie Cain for her many years of facilitating the group, which provides a night out for foster families, with craft activities for children and connecting time for parents.

On June 16, the 2010 “Best Parent We Can Be” class completed a specialized parenting class with a group review and evaluation followed by supper and presentation of certificates of completion. The group was co-facilitated by Marian Butler and Natalie Cain with invited guests who offered insights and suggestions from their expertise on various topics.



▲ Community Outreach Workers reconnect at the June 22 Neighborhood Summit with guests Bryan House and Jennifer Muñoz to learn about summer employment and community gardens.

COALITION CALENDAR

Northern Berkshire Summer Neighborhood Basketball League Month of July 6-8 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursday evenings during the month of July. To register a child for this non-competitive league, contact Liz Boland at the Coalition office, (413) 663-7588.

Interfaith Action Initiative Friday, July 16, 2010 10:30 a.m.

First Baptist Church in North Adams. (Use the Eagle Street entrance).

National Night Out Tuesday, August 3, 2010 5:30-7:30 p.m.

The Masonic Temple, North Adams Community & Police...fighting together against crime!

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 Sally Sussman at 458-4670 or s.suss@verizon.net. For information about the CMCA program, call or email Lois Daunis, Prevention Coordinator at the Coalition office, (413) 663-7588 or ldaunis@nbccoalition.org.

Christina Rotolo named All Star Award Winner, Foster Parent - Western Region

Pittsfield- Tina is a single foster parent who has provided a stable and loving home to over 100 children for almost a decade. She kept siblings together, advocated for teens in school and college and secured the necessary resources the youth needed to be successful. As a hotline home, she has been invaluable to the Pittsfield Office. This foster parent is very diligent in following up with the educational, health, and emotional needs of the children. She transports her foster children to and from school and to visits with their parents and siblings. She also participates in therapy to support the children.

Tina serves as the Office PACT program coordinator and every Tuesday and Thursday meets with social workers, completes documentation and makes calls to foster parents. Her organizational skills are exemplary.

Of note, Tina attends the foster parent support groups, at times co-leading them by providing seasonal crafts projects. As a foster parent recruiter, she has encouraged many families to attend MAPP training. On April 11, 2010 she attended the 2010 Jordan's Furniture



▲ Tina Rotolo

Plus One Celebration event.

Most importantly, it is what she does that goes unnoticed. How she normalizes the children's lives. They ride bikes on Sundays, go kayaking and camping, attend gymnastics, eat out once a week, play board games and go to movies.

She can secure any camp for any child who wants to attend and makes sure they have everything they need. Tina has high expectations of her foster children. They are required to volunteer and partake in community service, to get involved.

Our thanks to Christina Rotolo is immeasurable. She is a tremendous asset to the Pittsfield Area Office and the agency and we are proud to honor her today.



▲ Adams Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol sponsored a SteepleCat game in June.

Northern Berkshire Grows!

Northern Berkshire Grows garden program is off to a great start this year. This nutrition program guides neighbors in growing, maintaining and harvesting their own fresh vegetables. All ages welcome, green thumb not required! If you are a resident of Greylock Garden Apartments, Brayton Hill, Mohawk Forest, Tunnel Brook Townhouses, or UNO, look for flyers announcing the weekly Garden Clubs that start once school is finished. Or call Jennifer at REACH for more information (413) 664-5284. Hope you can join us!

Community Barbeque Benefits Area Youth

Big Brothers Big Sisters, COTY and Youth Center, Inc. and Berkshire Dance Theatre invite you to join them for a Community Barbeque at the Bounti-Fare Restaurant (located on Route 8 in Adams) on Tuesday, July 20th from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Let Dave, his crew and your friends from Big Brothers Big Sisters, COTY and Youth Center, Inc. take care of you on the terrace (inside if you prefer or if it rains).

Dave prepares a delightful menu of mixed grill and picnic fare that satisfies even the pickiest eaters. Diners can chose from burgers, dogs, pulled pork, corn on the cob, steamers and more. All items are served ala carte and priced individually and very reasonably (\$1-\$8)! Raffle items and home baked treats will also be available. The best part- proceeds from your purchase directly fund programming for kids in our community. This is a win /win situation. You get a nice stress free, cook free, clean up free meal sure to please the whole family while helping Big Brothers Big Sisters, COTY and Youth Center, Inc. provide more activities to our local youth!

Summer Camp at the Williamstown Youth Center

The Williamstown Youth Center will again facilitate an 8 week summer camp program from June 28th through August 20th. Children participate in clubs, take lots of exciting field trips to recreational and cultural venues and have lots of opportunities to participate in arts related activities. Camp is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. each day. Cost is only \$125 per week, plus a one-time annual membership fee of \$35. Financial assistance is available. Check out our website (www.williamstownyouthcenter.org) or call (413) 458-5925 for information.

United Cerebral Palsy Assoc. Announces Annual Golf Classic

The United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County announces its twelfth annual golf classic on Wednesday, July 14, 2010 at Waubeeka Golf Links in Williamstown. Sponsors, golfers and prizes are needed to make this event a success. All funds raised are used to support UCP services to children and adults with disabilities and their families in Berkshire County. Call Christine Singer or Joni Thomas at (413) 442-1562.

UCP of Berkshire County Seeks Nurse

UCP of Berkshire County seeks a part-time Registered Nurse to conduct Skilled Nursing Visits for individuals with disabilities in their homes primarily in Northern Berkshire County. Please send resume, cover letter, licensure information and 2 recent supervisory references to: UCP, 208 West St., Pittsfield, MA or twalger@ucpberkshire.org

DCF Looking for Foster/Adoptive Parents

The Department of Children and Families is looking for foster and adoptive parents for Berkshire County. We are looking for families to take infant, toddlers and teenagers. Please consider opening your home to take a child. Your life experience could help a child experience life. For more information please contact, Lori Kays (413) 236-1815.

Northern Berkshire Media Contacts

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 they receive a copy as well.

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

N. Berkshire Community TV
nbctc01@gmail.com

Time Warner
albch22ad@twcable.com

Transcript
news@thetranscript.com

WAMC
news@wamc.org

Berkshire Bureau
csaldo@wamc.org

WilliNet
willinet@williams.edu

WNAW
news@wnaw.com

WNYT
releases@wnyt.com

Women's Times
berknews@thewomenstimes.com

WUPE/WBEC
news@wupe.com

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 743-1767
Rev. Daniel J. Boyle

St. Mark's Episcopal
P.O. Box 191 743-0947
Rev. Edward A. King

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

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 Dr.
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

continued on page 11

North Adams Farmers Market to offer locally grown/produced products

The North Adams Farmers Market operates on Saturdays, July 17 - October 30, 2010 from 8 a.m. until noon in the municipal lot on St. Anthony Drive between Holden and Marshall Streets. The market offers a variety of locally grown produce as well as products such as locally produced eggs, honey, maple syrup and more. WIC and Elder Services coupons are accepted as well as SNAP benefits (EBT cards, formally called "food stamps"). Shoppers can meet the growers of their food and ask them questions about how the food is grown! For more information call the North Adams Office of Tourism at (413) 664-6180.

Images Cinema presents "Family Flicks under the Stars"

Free! Sundays at Sundown, July 11 - August 1. Outdoors, at Chapin Lawn, off Rt 2, near the top of Spring Street. Rain Location: Images Cinema, 50 Spring Street, Williamstown. **July 11:** BABE, **July 18:** GALAXY QUEST, **July 25:** NORTH BY NORTHWEST, **August 1:** ANNIE

Office of Tourism lists Summer Activities

Northern Berkshire Food Festival
Sunday, June 27, 12-4 p.m.. Main Street. One to three different mini-entrees from up to 20 restaurants, plus micro-brewed beer and wine tasting, live music, more. Call (413) 664-6180.

Concert at Windsor Lake Series
Wednesday, June 30, each Wednesday through August 4. Concerts are held from 7-8:30 p.m.. Free to the public. Call (413) 664-6180.

City Fireworks Display
Sunday, July 4. Noel Field Athletic Complex. Held at end of SteepleCats game, approximately between 9-10 p.m.

North Adams Farmer's Market
Saturdays, from July 17 until October 30. 8- 12:30 p.m. Held at municipal lot across from MASS MoCA.

Wordplay @ Papyri Books

Wordplay, sponsored by Papyri Books, is held the **second Saturday of each month at 7:00 p.m.** Our featured authors for July and August are Howard Cruse and Stuart Bartow. A Q&A session, refreshments, and Open Mic follow the reading. Open Mic is an opportunity for guests to share their written work with five minutes allotted for each reader. Papyri Gallery features the work of local photographer Kelly Lee for the months of July and August. Join us this summer on the second Saturday evening of each month at **Papyri Books, 45 Eagle Street, North Adams.** For additional information, please call (413) 662-2099. Wordplay is free and open to the public.

Eagle Street Beach
Wednesday, July 14. 4 - 7 p.m., Eagle Street (Rain Date July 15). Toys and prizes plus live music. Great family event.

Mettawee River Professional Children's Theater
At Windsor Lake, July 21, 8 p.m. Free outdoor theater for the whole family.

City Downtown Celebration
Wednesday, August 25, 5:30-9:00 p.m. Downtown North Adams. Call (413) 664-6180.

Fall Foliage Festival
Saturday, September 25- Sunday, October 3. Various events, visit www.fallfoliageparade.com

Fall Foliage Parade
Sunday, October 3. Parade steps off from Wal Mart at 1 p.m. rain or shine.

Berkshire County 4-H Youth Fair Turns 70!

Come take part in the OLDEST youth run, youth fair in the country!!! August 21st from 9-5 at the 4-H Fairgrounds in Pittsfield (on Utility Drive, off Holmes Rd). Admission \$FREE\$.

If you know of a youth 5-18 who may be interested in exhibiting in the fair, contact the 4-H office at 448-8285 to find out where to pick up an entry book. The fair is open to all youth to exhibit. Things that can be entered range from animals, vegetables, photography, conservation, sewing, art, canning, crafts...the options are endless. So, come join the fun and see who takes part in the goat milking contest!!

The Northern Berkshire Community Tennis Association to offer Adult and Youth Lessons & Youth Leagues

Youth leagues begin on June 1 and lessons on July 5th. Adult lessons begin June 10. All programs are held at the MCLA Joseph Zavattaro Athletic Complex unless otherwise stated with Professional Certified Instructors. Visit www.nbcta.org for more information or call 413-663-5380 or e-mail tennis123@roadrunner.com.

Orthopedist Dr. Whittum Offers Presentation "Preparing for Surgery"

Williamstown Commons Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is hosting a free presentation by Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon, James Whittum, MD, entitled "Preparing for Surgery: Hips, Knees and Shoulder" on Wednesday, June 23, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Williamstown Commons, 25 Adams Road, Williamstown, MA.

Complimentary refreshments will be served. For more information and to RSVP for the reception, call Williamstown Commons at (413) 458-2111.

Main Street Stage to Raise Funds for Tapestry Health

The cast and crew of The Baltimore Waltz at Main Street Stage will be passing the hat at every performance of the popular comedy to raise funds for Tapestry Health's AIDS-education efforts in Berkshire County. The farce won playwright Paula Vogel the 1992 Obie Award for Best New American Play. "The play is funny," said director Wendy Walraven, "but the subject, AIDS, is serious - one that has impacted on my life, which is why I'm proud to be directing it in North Adams." The fantasy travelogue was the playwright's response to the 1988 death of her brother Carl, who succumbed to complications of AIDS before they were able to enjoy a long-planned European vacation. Evening performances are 8:00 p.m. on Thursday to Saturday, **June 24-26**. There will be a matinee on **Sunday, June 20** at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for general admission, \$15 for seniors, and \$10 for students. The Thursday performance is a pay-what-you-can community night. Main Street Stage is at 57 Main Street, North Adams. For reservations, call (413) 663-3240 or visit www.MainStreetStage.org. Enjoy the show and please be generous when the "hat" makes its way around the audience.

Downstreet Art : Call For Bikes!

Are you an old, squeaking bike living in a basement or in a garage and eager to go back on the road? If yes, join us! In case you need it we will fix you, we will give you the right equipment and you will catch the wind again in your bright new GREEN look! (yes, we will paint you green) If you wish to be part of DOWNSTREET ART ask to be dropped every Saturday afternoon (through August 28), at MCLA Gallery 51 in North Adams, between 3pm and 6pm. Pick up can be arranged in the North Adams' area. More info at http://web2.mcla.edu/index.php/bcrc/comments/downstreet_art_call_for_bikes/

Faith Institutions and Leaders Cont'd

North Adams continued

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 Crowsen

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. Michelle Grube

St. John's Episcopal
35 Park Street 458-8144
Rev. Peter Elvin

St. Patrick and Raphael
54 Southworth 458-4946
Rev. Wayne C. Biernat

Second Congregational
81 Hancock Rd. 458-3467
Rev. Penny Rich Smith

White Oaks Cong.
480 White Oaks Road 458-4633
Rev. Sue Stewart

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

Coalition Staff

Executive Director

Al Bashevkin: abashevkin@nbcoalition.org

Business & Administrative Staff

Liz Boland: lboland@nbcoalition.org

Gracie Vincent: gvincen@nbcoalition.org

Northern Berkshire Neighbors

Natalie Cain: ncain@nbcoalition.org

UNITY

Kate Merrigan: kmerrigan@nbcoalition.org

Robin Lehlitner: rlehlitner@nbcoalition.org

Grants Manager, CMCA

Lois Daunis: ldaunis@nbcoalition.org

Summer Intern

Emily Baker-White: ebakerwhite@nbcoalition.org

Taylor Stevens: tstevens@nbcoalition.org

Newsletter Coordinator

Bert Lamb: blamb@nbcoalition.org

nbCC is supported by:



Final Thoughts . . .

Summer is beginning to show in so many ways. Warm weather, unpredictable rain, beautiful days, too hot days. It's the time when I hope for so much and struggle to reach my goals. It's a time of highs and lows.

Kinda like what this year has been for the Coalition. But summer is here and I'm hoping that we can fill our gaps (see the job advertisement on page 3), take some much needed time, and get ready for another year of Coalition business.

Getting into the business of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition leads me to the purpose of these final thoughts. Our annual fundraising campaign is about to begin. There are many ways to donate: online @ <http://nbcoalition.org/products-page/> or by mailing in a donation envelope to the Coalition office.

But please give. You've heard it from many and it's true. Our work is never as important as it is during difficult changing times. Today, we see more needed for families struggling to keep their heads above water. Many are still out of work. State, federal, and local budgets are under duress, and that means there is less money for services that help people get through these difficult times.

That's why the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition and our role in bringing the community together to address these many issues is so important. During challenging times, we've got to keep conversations alive about what to do. That's what the Coalition does during its monthly forums, its neighborhood gatherings, youth leadership meetings. It's what our Community Outreach Workers do. It's what every community should do and we are lucky this is happening in Northern Berkshire.

We need your financial support as much as we ever did. The community's financial support has allowed us to continue our programming during a time that government funding has significantly been reduced. Help us continue. Donate generously and participate in the many ways that the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition helps to build a stronger Northern Berkshire community.

- Al Bashevkin

Next Coalition Meeting:
Emerging Issues in our
Community: Setting our
agenda for the year ahead
Friday, September 10
10 a.m. to noon
First Baptist Church North Adams
Have a great summer!!!

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition
61 Main Street, Suite 218
North Adams, MA 01247
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