

Our Mission: "South Whidbey Youth Connection fosters healthy youth development by offering drug and violence free opportunities for area teens in a safe and nurturing environment."

Mark your CALENDAR

South Whidbey Youth Connection Presents:
A Family Photo Shoot!
Saturday, November 7th
9am - 3pm
(reservations requested)
at The Hub in Langley

Santa will be there!

The HUB

For details, watch for our newspaper ads and web site postings.

Photography by Michael Stadler

www.swyouth.com
360.221.4142
info@swyouth.com



Our Readers Come Through to Save Trees!

To those of you who took us up on our call to help save trees and reduce our operating costs by subscribing to the full-color email edition of this publication, we thank you!

If you're green with envy or around the gills and would like to join them, please send your email address and name to gary@swyouth.com

The Jolly Green Giant will bless you.

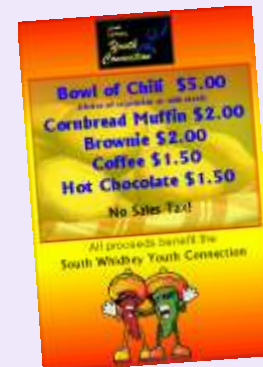
Connections

THE SOUTH WHIDBEY YOUTH CONNECTION NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2009

From the Executive Director

Dear friends of SWYC,

The challenges of fundraising! Countless websites, books and professional journals tell us how it's done. It's a snap. Anyone can do it. There's no shortage of long lists of fundraising ideas. Car wash, anyone? Or how about bingo? an on-line auction? a bake sale? a spaghetti dinner? a concert? There's even a "green" fundraising category: anyone up for an earth friendly marathon? tree planting? community cleanup? ...



Local bulletin boards are overflowing with fundraising event and public service announcements. Keeping one's posters from being buried or prematurely "disappeared" is practically a contact sport. There's a certain ruthlessness involved. If you happen to be respectful of others, you'll be trampled underfoot. The "decline of civility," some call it. It's tempting to respond in kind, but our conscience won't allow us to explore the dark side. Maybe we're just naïve. A happy-go-lucky puppy among wild dogs ...



With grants almost non-existent, and most every community service organization coming up short, fundraising competition has become very intense indeed. The number of competing events being staged is growing steadily. How many benefit art shows and spaghetti dinners can one small community support! Talk about the law of diminishing returns! The bottom line (pardon the jargon) is that our fundraising events this year have for the most part yielded disappointing results. We're running about \$4,500.00 behind compared to a typical year. To a small organization like ours, this seemingly small sum is huge!

Why the shortfall? Can we blame the "great recession"? I suppose that's a valid explanation. How about blaming South Whidbey demographics, with a disproportionately older population presumably indifferent to the needs of youth? The facts don't bear this out. Our seniors are exceedingly generous. Or we could blame me and my staff for not doing a better job publicizing SWYC's mission and the healthy alternatives we offer teens with our many programs. This might be the case, but observing how hard and smart our tiny, highly-leveraged staff, enthusiastic volunteers and ten outstanding board members work, I think not.

So, let's just blame the economy.



The net result of all this is that to meet our budget we've become ever more reliant upon donors—those who send us cash as opposed to attending one of our fundraising events. Check out the list of donors in this issue, where you'll find individuals, families, corporations, local retailers, churches and service organizations who have opened their hearts and wallets to us. We are very thankful for their generosity and desire to help promote the health and welfare of our teens!



In the face of this hard scrabble reality, we've made the tough adjustments—such as reducing staff hours and cutting budgets to the bone—necessary to survive and serve our constituency, the delightful young people who benefit from the healthy choices and skill-building opportunities we offer them. No drugs. No alcohol. No violence. Just plain fun. Now that makes all the struggle worthwhile!

Thank you for listening, caring and responding!

Duane Gimbel



SWYC PROGRAM REPORTS

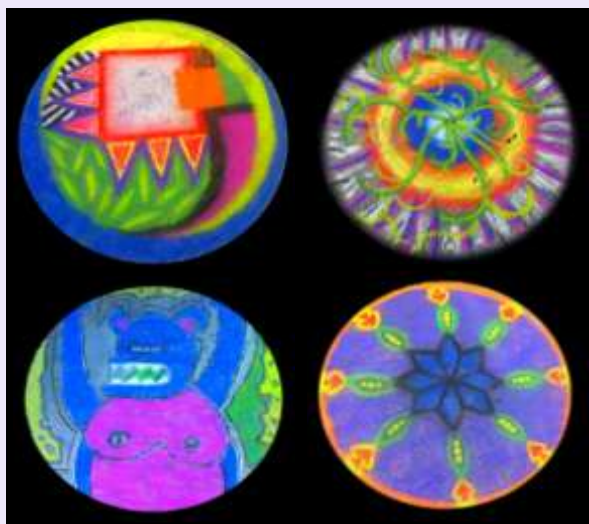
Youth Leadership Council

Diana Shirley
YLC Manager

For those of you not familiar with the Youth Leadership Council, it's an adult-mentored program initiated and led by youth. It provides our young

people a safe space to freely voice how their peers can be best served, and with the wherewithal to take independent action on their behalf. They explore options, then recommend and organize safe and drug-free community events, as well as donate their time to worthy causes.

Our Langley Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival, co-sponsored by SWYC, Island Coffeehouse and Books, The City of Langley and the Island Arts Council, proved a great success! More than 200 youth beautified the sidewalks of Langley with colorful and sometimes intricate, Mandala-like designs. Months later you can still detect faint traces of chalk patterns as you walk the city. What a great way for youth to express themselves artistically! To view almost 80 photos of these eye-popping creations and the young people who chalked them, go online to www.swyouth.com/chalkart. Here are a few examples to whet your appetite.



Other YLC-sponsored events held since we last met in this space include two well-attended open mic parties featuring poetry, and music—most of it original—from many genres, including rock, hip-hop and folk. A special thank-you goes to Ahren Bader-Jarvis, who not only provided the sound systems for these and prior events, but also performed his delightfully eccentric, politically oriented tunes. Also, thank you Langley United Methodist Church for donating Fellowship Hall for these events.

Diana Shirley

Frankie Petittlerc
Hub Program Manager



The big story at The Hub, our after-school drop-in center for 6th thru 12th graders, continues to be ever-increasing attendance which—measured by total number of visits—more than doubled this school year compared to last! The Hub Program's teen center, closed for the summer, will reopen on the first day of school, Sep-



tember 8th. Hours of operation are 2:00 – 5:30pm on school days, except for early release days, when our hours are 11:00am - 3:00pm. We serve a healthy snack every day (with help from The Good Cheer Food Bank, Thank you!), celebrate birthdays, offer free guitar lessons, supervise art projects and provide myriad activities, such as ping-pong, foosball, billiards, board games, barbecues, movies, musical instruments, Wii games like Guitar Hero—and the list goes on. To view a calendar with details about what's happening at The Hub, go to www.swyouth.com/hubcalendar.

The Hub's Summer Program was very successful. Our teens enjoyed sailing lessons on Lone Lake (thank you South Whidbey Yacht Club members for donating your time!) and swam and camped at lovely Bowman Bay in Deception Pass Park. Then, they had a swimming party in Oak Harbor Pool, sailed through the San Juan's aboard the "Cutty Sark," a classic, 52-foot sailing ketch with captain John Colby Stone teaching seamanship, knocked over pins at the "Oak Bowl," learned skimboarding techniques with Jack'd Skimboards, and go-karted in Oak Harbor. Instrumental to our success has been the skill and dedication of our Hub Program Assistant, Erick Westphal. Thanks, Erick! And we're very grateful to South Whidbey Parks & Recreation for publicizing our summer events and handling registration. Thank you!



If you have any questions about these activities, or about the Hub, please contact me at 221.3230 or frankie@swyouth.com
Frankie Petittlerc



My able Kitchen Assistant, Erin Wright (2nd to left in photo), has graduated high school and will continue to support us with her excellent work ethic, warm smile and winning attitude. Congratulations, Erin!

Thank You!

The board of directors, staff, volunteers and youth of the South Whidbey Youth Connection gratefully acknowledge the following community members and organizations who have made generous donations to our programs since our last newsletter.

Shelly & Douglas Ackerman
Nancy & Alison Arnold
Susie Barnett
Sharon Cummings Beck
Mildred Billig
Jayanne Bixby
David Bravender
Penelope Cabot
Allard & Margrethe Calkins
David Doorn
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Island Art Council
Langley United Methodist Church
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South Whidbey Rotary Club Foundation
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St. Hubert Church
The Star Store
Trinity Lutheran Church
United Way of Island County
Village Pizzeria

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There is Room for You Here!

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Or donate on-line at www.swyouth.com/give

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You may use my name in campaign materials

I prefer to remain anonymous

Please remove me from your mailing list

*Contributions are tax deductible under IRS code 501-c3

Please detach and mail with your check made payable to

"South Whidbey Youth Connection"

P.O. Box 331 * Langley, WA 98260

Enclosed is my Gift of:

\$50 (Guardian)

\$100 (Friend)

\$50 / month

\$100 / month

\$_____ (other)

My employer will

Match my gift

Call me as a volunteer

I would like my donation to support:

The Hub

Youth Leadership Council

What is Needed the Most