

News From the Heights



Spring Fling Highlights Our Talented Community

On Saturday May 14th the Kennedy Heights Community Center hosted our 25th annual community block party **Spring Fling**. Despite record cold temperatures and the constant threat of rain the event was a great success. For the first time ever the Wild Rumpus Circus attended and kids had the opportunity to try stilt walking, juggling, tumbling, and walking the tight rope. Throughout the day youth groups performed



songs and dances. The afternoon included a hula-a-hoop-a-thon, pie eating contest and many great activities for families. The event would not have been possible without our generous sponsors: Madison Gas and Electric, Meridian Group, Wegner LLP CPAs and Consultants; Madison Chiropractic North and Anchorbank FSB. Thank you to our sponsors and volunteers.



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Girls Inc. Enjoying All Summer Has to Offer

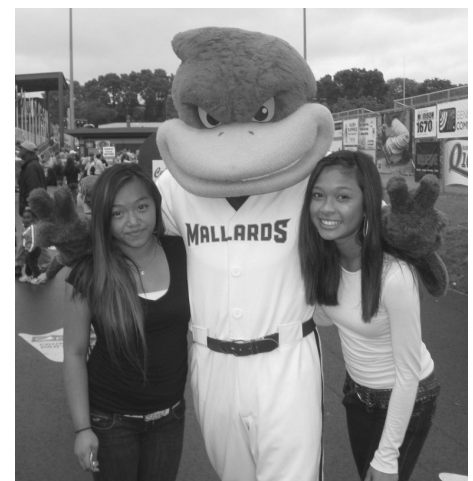
By: Lisa DuChateau

If your daughter is a part of Girls Inc., you know that she has had an incredibly busy summer, full of new experiences. We started summer with the Madison Mallards baseball team, cheering them on as they beat Eau Claire, and even catching a fly ball! With a visit to JenEhr Farm, we picked (and ate) fresh, delicious strawberries. We've been swimming at Goodman pool, visited the Splash Park in Middleton, canoed and pedal



-boated. We spent two weeks learning to row with the Mendota Rowing Club. We have also tackled many projects at the center, making our own lip gloss and soap, sewing pillows, decorating T-shirts, building a circuit to power a personal fan and painting pots to plant herbs in. There is a lot of summer left and we have much more to do. Still to come is hosting a food stand with the vege-

tables that we harvest from the UW-Extension Youth Garden, a trip to Mount Olympus, and a visit to see the Tommy Bartlett Water Ski Show. We have had a great summer, but we are also looking forward to the school year!



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Executive Director's Note



The new school year will bring many changes to our center. After ten years of dedicated service, VamMeej Yang, our Asian Outreach Coordinator is leaving the center to return to school. Over the past ten years VamMeej has helped over 1000 different people with 1000 different things. His deep connection to the community and ability to connect people to resources and each other will be deeply missed. For the month of August, True Vang will be

providing drop in support while we hire a new coordinator.

VamMeej is not the only face that will be missing from the center this fall. After a year of AmeriCorps service both Annika Jones and Johnny Ly will be finishing their terms of service. At the end of August they each will have given 1700 hours of their time to supporting youth in this community; our center has benefited greatly from this gift of

their service. They have my gratitude and my respect.

Speaking of gifts of time two energetic and talented marketing interns, Audra Spahn and Hillary Martin have been hard at work developing an e-newsletter *New Heights*. E-mail distribution of our e-newsletter will begin in August., you can send an e-mail to newsletter@khcommunity.org if you would like to be added to the list.

The Dog Days of Summer

By: Annika Jones



For the past several weeks, youth from our summer program's Leadership Club have been finding out what it means to be a leader and how to get involved in their community through service. They toured the state capitol and Madison College, and volunteered their time collecting native plant seeds at Lake View Woods Park. They cared for dogs at Shelter from the Storm Animal Rescue and led children's games at KinderCare.

A favorite destination was Shelter from the Storm, where youth made peanut butter and cereal dog treats

and helped to socialize and groom the animals. According to 5th grader Destiny Madge, she "liked it because we got to meet different kinds of dogs and cats and learn about how they were treated before they got here. They need good homes." 5th grader Samiya Gulley says that, "the animals at the shelter wanted to be treated well and loved the way they're supposed to be."

So how does volunteering time at an animal shelter, a park, or a daycare relate to leadership? Youth began to see how service to the community is a great way to show leadership. Being in

leadership club means "we get to meet people with different jobs and talk to them about what they do and then help them out," Samiya explains. Members of this club also thought about what leadership means to them. For Destiny, "leadership means you do good things and people want to follow what you do because you're doing good things." All the youth involved in the club this summer found that there are lots of ways to step up and do good things in their community.

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Kennedy Heights Adult Resource Fair

By: Clare Norelle

The new Kennedy Heights Adult Resources program is beginning to take shape, with help from everyone who attended the Adult Resources Fair on Tuesday, July 19th. Participants who came that night received dinner, and gift certificates for groceries, as well as a wealth of information about free and inexpensive resources in our community. And they left behind something just as valuable: their ideas and visions for how the community center can become more of a gathering place and resource for adults in the neighborhood.

The Adult Resources Fair began with a delicious dinner from Benvenutos, the great Italian restaurant down the street off of Northport. While everyone was eating, our guest presenters began to give short, five-minute presentations about their organizations and resources.

Donna Bryant has 30 years of experience working with Medicaid and Medicare, and she made herself available to answer **people's questions about their health care benefits.**

Cortney Doescher-Hino,

from the North/Eastside Senior Coalition, described **the free lunches, case management, and other programs for seniors** offered by NESCO.

Janet Dyer, supervisor of community programs with Madison School Community Recreation, told us that while MSCR adult programs are relatively inexpensive, low-income residents of Dane County can apply to take **one free class** each semester. This includes exercise classes of all kinds, as well as classes in **cooking, dance and art.**

Lorrie Hurckes joined us from the Dane County Timebank, a free system that helps people to trade skills and resources with each other and with organizations. She described **how this system helps people get their needs met, meet new people, and learn new things. For some people it has even helped to make connections for employment.**

Torrie Larson from Metro Transit told participants how they can get **the best deals and low-income discounts when buying tickets or passes to ride the bus.**

LaDonna McReynolds spoke as a member of the Kennedy Heights Community Center Board of Directors, and she invited people to become members of the board as well—**a free way to have a say in how the community center works.**

Ruth Rohlich, director of the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative, described their free programs that offer **guidance with loans for women and men who want to start a business.**

Katie Scharf and Madeleine Diemer came from Lakeview Library to talk about **the library's free programs and other supportive resources for adults.**

Susan Taylor told about the free classes and one-on-one mentoring offered by UW Extension to **help people understand their finances and manage their money.**

Mary Watrud coordinates the Skilled Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Training program, which is also free. She described how it **helps workers prepare for the exams that will allow them access to well-paid apprenticeships in the trades,** and invited participants to come talk with her

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 True Vang, After School Coordinator,
 Early Childhood Teacher
 Tyson Brown, Food Service
 Dionna Stovall, After School Staff
 Jaimie Schlitcher, After School Staff
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 Patrick Winter, Youth Program
 Clare Norelle, Food Pantry
 Adult Resource Coordinator
 Stephanie Nash, MERIT Coordinator
 Johnny Ly, AmeriCorps Member
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Now Hiring

Asian Outreach Coordinator
 20 hrs /wk
 Food Pantry Assistant
 4 hrs /wk
 After School Assistant
 10 hrs / wk
 Adult Resource Specialist
 10 hrs /wk
 Substitute Preschool and
 After School Teachers
 As needed
Job Descriptions and Application online and at the community center office.

News From the Heights



Wish List

School Supplies
 Non-perishable foods
 (rice, peanut butter,
 tuna, soup with meat,
 cereal, canned fruit)
 Toiletries
 Diapers
 Blocks (Legos)
 Sports Equipment:
 Kick Balls, Volleyballs
 Craft Materials
 New Board Games
 New Bike Helmets
 Magazine Subscriptions:
 Highlights, Ranger Rick,
 New Moon, Time for
 Kids, SI Kids
 15 passenger van
 G and PG movies
 Wii games
 Children's Music

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Adult Resource Fair—Continued

and register for upcoming trainings.

Finally, Lisa Wiese and Chris Moore gave an engaging presentation about the Northside Farmers Market, which takes place down the street from Kennedy Heights in the parking lot between Northport and Sherman Ave. every Sunday morning from 8:30 –12:30, May through October.

Shoppers can use their QUEST cards, WIC, and senior FMNP vouchers to buy fresh produce, dairy, meat, and delicious baked goods at the market, and they can earn timedollars (for use in the Timebank) by volunteering at the market, as well.

VamMeej and Kanglue Yang did a great job translating these presentations for the many Hmong neighbors who attended the fair. After all of the presenters had introduced themselves we took a short break, and then there was time for participants to make the rounds and talk with the presenters individually, asking questions and learning more. Presenters offered brochures, business cards, schedules, and even the forms that people needed to apply to various programs.

We finished the evening with a group brainstorming session about the kinds of adult programming that people would like to see at the community center in the future, as well as feedback about the Adult Resources Fair, and door prizes.

Here are some of the things that *we* learned, from the people who attended the Adult Resources Fair:

Participants all said that they liked the fair, and several people noted that they especially appreciated the diversity of resources presented and the chance to talk with presenters and ask questions. Some people said that they would like us to invite employers and people from employment agencies next time, and some asked for social workers and providers of low-cost counseling. But when we asked how we might improve the fair, the most common suggestions were to have it be longer and to do it again!

From the group brainstorming and the feedback forms we learned that participants were especially interested in seeing these kinds of adult programming happen at the center in the future:

A women's group: Sewing classes:

*CNA training: A men's group
 Help accessing financial aid for
 going back to school*

While we can't offer all of these things right away, we will have **two bilingual meetings (in English and Hmong) to discuss the idea of starting a women's group and a men's group at the center. These planning meetings will take place on Monday August 29th, at 6:30 for the women's group, and 7:30 for the men's group.**

Thank you to those of you who came, participated, and shared your ideas with us! And we look forward to seeing more of the rest of you next time. In the meantime if you'd like to share with us any more suggestions, questions, or requests, related to the adult resources program or any of the presenters mentioned above, please leave a note or a telephone message for Clare Norelle at the community center: 244-0767, adultresources@khcommunitycenter.org.

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Early Childhood Program News

By: Nicole Cummings

What a wonderful summer we're having! The children have been quite active indoors and out. So many of our friends are budding artists; painting and creating their own crafts, making masks, and shaping clay into coil pots and hanging art.

Worm composting was a favorite in our science area this spring. Upon arrival in the morning, several children would examine the clear container for worms. If not seen immediately, they would ask for spoons to dig out the worms so they could

hold them. Which led to many missions of digging for worms outside, that sparked more interest in collecting ants, that led to finding cicadas (both alive and dead).

Another program highlight was attending two children's events at the Monona Terrace. You know a field trip is a success when you see the children mimicking what they saw in their play. We witnessed several "sword dances" and "ribbon dances" by the children after seeing the Blue Willow Chinese Dance troupe. During the West African Drum &

Dance group, we saw many children bopping, dancing, and singing along. A big thank you to our families who helped chaperone our field trips to the Monona Terrace, it would not have been as successful without you! The annual field trip to Henry Villas Zoo this August. The children get so fired up when asked about their favorite animals, they can't wait to share: "I like the giraffes because of their long necks!" "Monkeys!" "Snakes!" "Penguins, because of the way they walk!" "I like the Polar Bears!" "The Lion!" accompanied by a loud roar.



Farwell, Kennedy Heights

By Annika Jones

I can't believe it's near the end of my year here at Kennedy Heights as a PASS AmeriCorps member. The time has flown by incredibly fast! I've met so many wonderful people here and I think the biggest reason that Kennedy Heights is a special place to me is because of the people who make it great.

The youth I've had the privilege of knowing through the After-School Program, Girls Inc and Summer Program have this infectious energy that's impossible to forget, and I will miss their jokes,

laughter and energy when I leave. It's been quite a year sharing the ups and downs of life with the youth here at our programs and they have taught me quite a bit about youth work, education and how to relate to one another. We've done all kinds of things together this past year: reading, debating, swimming, boating, playing games, cooking, gardening, volunteering, and of course studying during the school months. After all this, it will be hard to part ways with the youth I've gotten to know.

Luckily, I will not be going far away this fall and hope to still

be able to visit the center and stay in touch. I'll be continuing my studies here in Madison to become a certified secondary science teacher and working towards my Master's in Education over the next year.

Thank you to the whole community for opening up your lives and letting AmeriCorps members like myself become a small part of this great community at Kennedy Heights.



News From the Heights



Girls Inc. Becomes a 'Crew'

By Lisa DuChateau

With the help of Mendota Rowing Club (MRC), Girls Inc. had the opportunity to participate in a sport not easily accessible to youth and especially women, rowing! The girls spent two weeks learning the basics of rowing both on and off the water. Week one included a visit to our center by an MRC member. She shared some of her pictures and medals with the girls and taught them the rowing series. Then each girl had the opportunity to try out series



on the ergometer (erg) machines. During week two, we visited the boat house, took a tour, played a few games on the erg machines to review the rowing series, and viewed the various boats the club uses. Then the 'real' work began. The girls would have to work together to carry an 8-person skull out of the boathouse and into the water. This task challenged the girls' strength, listening skills, and ability to communicate and work as a team. But we did it! Once the skull was safely

in the water, the girls took turns rowing together in teams. Although this was an experience that tested their strength and required serious cooperation, the girls embraced it and had a great time (even with the sore shoulders)! We owe a special thank you to Mendota Rowing Club with their time and enthusiasm for involving youth in a sport they love. Girls Inc. is always excited to partner with organizations to provide girls with new opportunities and experiences.

Kyler Finds Physics

By: Patrick Winter



Earlier in the summer the science and technology club took a field trip to the UW physics and geology museums. We saw ancient fossils like the Tyrannosaurus rex skull and woolly mammoth skeleton, and rocks and minerals from all over the world. In the L.R. Ingersoll Physics Museum we saw exhibits on electricity and magnetism, wave and sound, light and optics, and mechanical physics. Kyler really took interest in the physics exhibits. He went from exhibit to exhibit, reading the descriptions and trying to make the described actions occur. I

couldn't get more than ten steps away without him calling me over to ask a new question. He was on the spinning platform measuring rotation and angular momentum for so long that he had trouble walking when he got off of it. Soon it was time to leave and it took everything I had in me to get him out of that museum. He kept asking me questions about the experiments and telling me what he saw during the ride home.

Throughout the summer he has continued to show interest in physical sciences not only asking what we will be doing during the next sci-

ence club meeting but also giving me ideas and recommendations as to what experiments we could try next. It is these new experiences that really help youth shape their interests and develop interest in education. If Kyler maintains this passion with science through school there is no telling where he could end up. Here at Kennedy Heights we strive to give our kids new experiences like these every week, and if even a few youth find new interests as part of our program I consider it a success.

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Madison Empowering Responsibility in Teens Pilot Success

By: Stephanie Nash

As the end of the summer rapidly approaches and we gear up for the school year, I would like to highlight and thank the work of the youth in our community and partnering agencies that were part of the first implementation of MERIT's pregnancy prevention awareness curriculum. 14 middle school students from our youth program successfully completed Making A Difference, a eight-module curriculum designed to educate and em-

power young people to shape their behavior in ways that will reduce their risk of STDs and pregnancy. We all can be proud of our community's youth for their leadership and committed involvement to self-awareness and positive healthy decision making. The Positive Youth Development Team appreciates the support of this community. I am looking forward to the continued facilitation of Making A Difference and Making Proud Choices as we step into year one of our five

year grant funded by the Office of Adolescent Health. Our 2011-2012 goal is to have 120-140 middle and high school youth throughout the North side to successfully complete this program.



Paddle Boats on Lake Wingra

By: Patrick Winter

Summer is coming to a close here at Kennedy Heights Community Center. It has been great so far. We have launched water-propelled rockets at Warner Park, swam at Goodman pool and Governor Nelson State Park, fished at Vilas Zoo, Tenney Park and Lake Wingra. We went bowling, watched 3D movies, hit balls at the batting cages, learned how to play basketball and dance step from Stephanie, gymnastics and drawing from Johnny, how to participate in the community and be a leader from Annika, we helped cook with Lisa, and learned about fishing and

water balloon slingshots from Patrick. One evening we went to Lake Wingra to rent paddle boats and fish. Deronde, Xaoly, and Shuefeng took out a yellow four-seater and Patrick and Johnny went out in the swan boat. We were catching lots of fish, sunfish, crappie and one very big perch, but soon it was time to start paddling in and we decided to make it a race to the launching dock. It was heated at the beginning but we soon learned that the swan boat couldn't turn to the left and the swan's giant neck and head were catching a lot of wind. Patrick and Johnny had to paddle the boat backwards all the way in to the dock.

Just before reaching the dock one of our life jackets fell into the lake. We had a hard time turning in the wind to get it, and after struggling for a while realized that we needed to catch it with one of our fishing poles. After a few casts we hooked it and reeled it in. Everybody on the dock was watching the show and laughing. If you would like to learn more about the youth programs offered at Kennedy Heights come into the Community Center and ask for some information. We'll be glad to answer any of your questions!



Kennedy Heights Neighborhood Association

199 Kennedy Heights
Madison, WI 53704

Phone: 608-244-0767
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E-mail: director@khcommunitycenter.org



Learn More or Donate at
khcommunitycenter.org



Now Enrolling Early Childhood

The Early Childhood Program is now enrolling for the school year! The ECP will run 8:30am-11:30am Monday through Friday, starting September 1st, the program is for 3—5 year olds. Enrollment packets are at the community center office. First priority is given to families who live in Kennedy Heights. We ask that families enrolling their children are able to make a 6 month or longer commitment and have their children attend regularly. Children must be potty trained. Enrollment packets are due back at the center by August 19th in order to receive priority.

Now Enrolling After School

The After School Program for elementary school students is now enrolling for fall.. Enrollment packets are available at the community center and priority will be given to residents who complete their packet by 8/19. Call True at 244-0767 for more information.

Back to School Cookout Aug. 25th

On Thursday August 25th Board Chair, John Givens and community member Marvin Pratt will be grilling out in front of the center for the Back to School Cookout and Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting. All community members are invited to come over to the center and enjoy a picnic. Staff and Board members will be available to meet. Program enrollment information for fall will be available. Some special guests from the community will be joining us and we will have some free school supplies for kids. Community members are encourage to bring a dish to pass: meat from the grill will be provided by the center. The Board of Directors will host a brief meeting and all are welcome to participate. Please join us!