Spring Fling Success!

By Alyssa Kenney

Sunday May 4th was sunny and afternoon temperatures soared to almost seventy degrees. It was a great day to be out in the neighborhood. Well over one hundred children and youth were joined by the parents, teachers, and center volunteers. Six different youth groups performed on the homemade stage, including KOJO, the Little ‘Hood Dancers, Girls Inc. and the Bayview Hmong dancers. Many youth performances were so popular that youth performed an encore performance later in the day. In addition to youth performances an active children’s area included ring toss, fishing, bean bag games, face painting, and mask making. Lines of children waited patiently for their turn to try their skill at the different games.

The Boys Group hosted community competitions throughout the afternoon, a hoop shoot out tournament, an egg toss, a three-legged race and as a finale to the day, a pudding eating contest. The Girls’ group hosted a bake sale, which sold out within the first hour. The Women’s group hosted knitting and Hmong needlepoint demonstrations during the Fling. The northside planning process attended the event to gather resident input into the neighborhood plan and the timebank came and distributed information. The UW Science Outreach program organized a budding scientist area.

The Boys Group Service Project

The Spring Fling would not have been possible without support from Northside TownCenter, AnchorBank, Madison Chiropractic, Madison Mallards, and Oscar Mayer. A huge THANK YOU to sponsors, staff members, volunteers and our hard working Board of Directors.
Note from the Executive Director

EVERYDAYNESS
This newsletter highlights some of the exciting stories of the last few months. These stories capture many important moments of the center, but I often feel like they neglect to tell about the everydayness of the work of the community center. Special trips, community service projects, and award ceremonies are important but they sometimes fail to capture the most important work of a community center. The real work is the consistency and dependability of programming, the close relationships among staff and families, and the many small, positive changes over a long time.

YOUTH WRITERS
This issue has the most youth written articles we have ever published. I hope we can continue to encourage youth to write and contribute, their voice is so important. Enjoy their stories.

FARWELLS / WELCOMES
The end of the school year brings change to the center staff. This year we had two fantastic social work interns, Pazee and Kiesha. Both will be completing their internships and graduating. Their departure will be a loss to the center, but we wish them many successes. Unfortunately, the center is also losing our Early Childhood Director, Kyle, he has made a great impact on our youngest residents. He will be moving to Boston to attend graduate school. The loss of members of the Kennedy Heights team always saddens me, but we have recently welcomed some new faces. Lisa Xiong, is our new after school assistant, Lo Change is our new Technology Coordinator, and James Chang is our new program assistant. I am pleased to have these new staff on the Kennedy Heights team.

THE TIME IS NOW
If you have been thinking about ways to get more involved in your community, one great way is to join the Kennedy Heights Board of Directors. This group guides the community center and sets the goals for our programs and services. Resident participation is critical to our success. We have just received a grant to do some long-term planning for the center and training for new Board members. So, now is a great time to join. The process is easy and the impact is huge. Call me at the center for more information 244-0767.

Kennedy Heights Volunteer Honored

By: Kyle Kozelka

This year, the United Way of Dane County held its annual Community Volunteer Awards on April 23rd at the Madison Concourse Hotel. The event recognizes and honors those who give of themselves and their time to volunteer in their community. Local agencies and non-profits are sent nomination packets which they can use to nominate one of their volunteers. This year Kennedy Heights nominated Kate Remington for the Awards.

Kate has been volunteering with the Early Childhood Program for over three years. She comes to the classroom weekly and donates her time and skills to the classroom. She is an extraordinary help and has been able to see many children from this community grow up and graduate from the program.

For being nominated, Kate was honored with 80 other nominees at the luncheon. Presenting the awards was Wisconsin First Lady Jessica Doyle. Nominees had their names printed in a bulletin and had their picture and profile projected onto a large screen during the Awards.

Kennedy Heights would like to thank all of their volunteers who help make what we do possible.

Summer Food Pantry Hours

By Jody Schmitz
The weekly food pantry is going to a more limited schedule starting with the week after school ends. Our budget for the food bank is suffering the same economic woes that the entire country is feeling. Usage and distribution per family has been at its highest the last few months. Therefore, we will be open every other week during the summer months, but plan to distribute a little more every other week. Please, give us your feedback on this change. Also, remember there are several other food pantries in on the northside. You can call 211 at any time to get the list of open food pantries.
Girls Inc. Performs at Kids Expo

By: Tchia Thao and Nakia Gulley

Girls Inc. had a dance performance at the Alliant Energy Center for the Kids Expo. Three different groups performed a dance. The first group was Shawnigura, Bea, and Angelique who did a dance to “Souljah girl” by Souljaboy. The second group was Bria, Mahogany, Fahlicity, Kelly, Monique, and Brittany, they danced to “Donk” by Souljaboy. The last group was Nakia, Christina, Kelly, Cora, and Tchia who did a dance to “Wind Up” by Kat DeLuna. They all did a great job dancing on stage!

After our performances, we got to watch Atwood Community Center’s Girls Inc. group do a dance and double-dutch. We then walked around to see what people at the Expo were doing. We got a lot of free stuff and watched a race for little kids.

It was fun and educational!

Will Power, Won’t Power

By: Monique Howard, Rakia Miles, Brittany Grisby, and La’Bria Ross

We really enjoyed “Will Power, Won’t Power”. This was a program for Girls Inc. where we learned about relationships and boys, about sex, STDs, pregnancy, about body parts and other girl things. We learned how to protect ourselves, and how to avoid risky situations. We also talked about our personal values and how to stick to our values and not give in to pressure. Lisa and the five girls from the Aspiring Nurses Association at the University of Wisconsin taught us a lot of things that we did not know about and answered our questions.

We also went on a field trip to the Holiday Inn and went swimming. We had fun going down the water slide and playing “Ring-around-the-Rosie”. We ate pizza and chicken nuggets.

What We Do In Girls Inc.

By: Cora Williams, Christina Yang, and Kelly Hongmanivahn

We have lots of fun in Girls Inc., let us tell you about what we do. We do so many activities, like homework, games, cooking club, photo club, and computer time. Girls Inc. is a place where you can make friends. We also go on a lot of field trips.

One of the field trips we went on was with ICO (Inner City Outings) to the Mitchell Domes in Milwaukee. There were two different domes that were two different climates. The first was the rainforest, which has air that was warm and misty. The second was the desert, which was warm and dry. When we were in Milwaukee we also went to the Urban Ecology Center. We held crayfish, snakes, and turtles. We even got to see the guy feed the snake a mouse.

We also went on a field trip to the Holiday Inn and went swimming. We had fun going down the water slide and playing “Ring-around-the-Rosie”. We ate pizza and chicken nuggets.
News From the Heights

Boys’ Group Service and Field Trip

By Evan Yang and Deronde Gulley

On Saturday April 19th Kennedy Heights Boys’ Group went to the Wisconsin Badgers spring football game. The starters played against the backups. The starters wore red and they won. The game was awesome and I think they might do good this season. But before the game we planted 36 trees for Arbor Day. We planted pine trees (which look like Christmas trees) at The Capital Springs State Recreation Area. We saw snakes, earth worms, and grubs when we dug up the dirt. The work was dirty but it was fun to help the environment. Overall the day was good!

By Youth For Youth Grant Awards

By David Yang & Kevin Hongmanivanh

The youth who wrote the grant were: Osha Dancy, Michael Hongmanivanh, David Yang, and Kevin Hongmanivanh. We wrote this grant for our Boys Group. The grant was for a project called “Work Your Muscles, Work Your Brain.” We want to help youth, work together as a team, and learn friendship. We will also use the money we earned to get equipment for our sports. Lastly, we want to use sports to be a good influence for younger kids. Kevin Hongmanivanh, David Yang, Roy Lavalley and Dale Maxfield went to the ceremony and received the money. The ceremony took place downtown in the United Way building. We saw lots of community centers and programs that received money. They talked about what they do as a community and what they were going to use the money and how will it help them.

An Avid Knitter Leaves Madison

By Jody Schmitz

A familiar face has been missing around Kennedy Heights for a few months. Beulah Lee, who has been living with us for several years, and has been busy around the community in many different activities, has gone home to Mississippi.

Needless to say we all miss her because she touched almost all of us in one way or another -- the food pantry, the Women’s Group, cooking classes, special events -- but, most of all, knitting. Perhaps the group that will be most likely to remember her (if they could) would be the hundreds of babies born at Madison hospitals, each of whom went home wearing one of Beulah’s knit caps. She really took to the knitting group and left behind a tangible gift to the whole community.
A Story About After School

By Raven Gary, Age 9

After School is so fun because of the teachers Lisa and Ms. True. They are always nice and it is fun because they try to do their best to let us have fun and they always help us out when we need it. Other staff that work here also help us out, they get stuff out that we can do that is always fun to play. They always make sure that we are safe.

What I do here?
When I am at After School I eat lots of snacks. We color, paint, and get to make things to take home. They even invite people to come here and show us how to knit and how a scientist makes food.

I also like playing the card games with my friends and everything else. They even let us pretend to work here, we have our own office at the program. Sometimes we have a fun party and get to dance and soon we are going on a field trip. I always have fun here.

Why are these Kids Under the Tables?

By: Dale Maxfield

Every Friday the 4th and 5th grade After School program does a different educational art project. Each art project aims to not only allow the children to explore their creative talents, but it also gives them the opportunity to learn about different aspects, techniques, styles, and important figures in art. Each week we alternate projects – one week is about a famous European or contemporary artist and the next week we discuss art styles from other parts of the world. The multicultural projects that we have explored range from Native American to Asian. The several artists that we have studied range from Winslow Homer and his watercolor landscapes to Michelangelo’s painting of the Sistine Chapel.

When we studied Michelangelo we wanted the kids to experience the difficulties of painting on the ceiling. After we discussed biographical facts, history, and techniques, we then allowed the kids to try it for themselves. We taped paper to the underside of the tables and asked the kids to draw whatever they wanted. They found that it was not only mentally difficult to draw upside down, but also physically difficult. The kids look forward to each Friday’s project and having their art displayed in the center for anyone to see!
News From the Heights

Parenting Workshop
With Dr. Xa

By Pazee Yang

On Saturday April 19th the Asian Outreach Program hosted a parenting workshop discussing intergenerational differences/conflicts for Hmong families. Altogether we had approximately 60 people attend, with half of them being parents or teenagers. We invited Dr. Xa Xiong, a well-known and respected member of the Hmong community to give his insight on the barriers and conflicts that exists within parent-child relationships due to acculturation.

Some of the major barriers Dr. Xiong discussed were cultural differences of societal norms and expectations between the Hmong and mainstream society. Dr. Xiong used many examples to demonstrate intergenerational differences. He encouraged parents to communicate with their children and to be more understanding of each others’ differences. From the feedback (surveys) we received, parents indicated a greater understanding for the needs of their children after the presentation.

Dr. Xiong also discussed educational support for children. The majority of the attendants found this part of the workshop most helpful. He recommended that teenagers look at the job market to determine which fields to study for college. Dr. Xiong also talked about grants, scholarships and financial aid available to students. Parents suggested that there be more workshops like this in the future.

Thank you to VamMeej and Alyssa for helping organize and plan the workshop! Thank you to Dr. Xiong for speaking with us and sharing your personal stories. Lastly, thank you to MGE for donating energy efficient light bulbs for our door prize drawing.

Kev Kawm Rau Niam Txiv
Nrog Dr. Xab

By Pazee Yang

Hnub 4 hli ntuj vas thiv 19, pawg Asian Outreach Program tuav ib lub rooj kawm txog niamtxiv thiab menyam tej kev nyuab siab. Muaj txog 60 leej tuaj koom, ib nrab yog niam txiv thiab cov tub ntxhais hluas. Peb thov Dr. Xab Xyooj tuaj, nws yog ib tug uas muaj npe thaiab txhua tus fwm nws heev nyob rau peb pawg Hmoob, Nws tuaj tham thib muab tswv yim rau peb txog kev sib rau zoo ntwam niamtxiv thiab menyam.

Dr. Xab tham txog Hmoob txoj kev cai thib nws txawv li cas ntwaw Amelikas kev cai. Nws piav txog tham cov niam thib txiv nyiam hnav cov ris taw loj thiab nyiam cia plaub hau ntev ntev, ho tamsim no, menyam nym iam hnav lub ris dai dai thiab zas plaub hau. Nws xav kom niamtxiv thiab menyam los sib tham kom sib nkagsiab tias yuav tsum hnav kom phil sawvdaws. Cov niamtxiv uas tuaj koom peb hnub ntawd pom tias lawv nkagsiab menyam zoo mensis lawm.

Tsis tag li ntawd, Dr. Xab tham txog kev txhawb menyam txoj kev kawm ntawv. Thuam tham txog kev kawm ntawv, nws yog ib yam uas cov niamtxiv pom tias pab tau lawv heev. Nws qhia cov tub ntxhais hluas kom mus kawm uam haujwlm uas yam tomntej no yuav txais neeg coob. Nws tham txog cov nyiaj uas tseem fww pab cov tuv ntxhais kawm ntawv los yog financial aid thiab nyiaj uas cov tub ntxhais hluas yeej tau los pab them nqi kawm ntawv. Niamtxiv pom zoo tias lub rooj kawm no pab tau lawv heev thiav lawv xav kom muaj rooj kawm li no ntxiv rau lawv thiav lawv cov menyam.

Kuv xav ua tsuag rau VamMeej thiab Alyssa, nkawd pab kuv npaj lub rooj kawm no! Ua tsuag uas Dr. Xab tseem tuaj pab txhawb peb thib. Thiav kuv xav ua tsuag rau MG&E lawv tau pab muaj qhov muag teev rau peb fiab.
Technology Coordinator

By: Lo Chang
Hi, my name is Lo Chang and I have recently accepted the new position as Community Center Technology Coordinator. I lived here at Kennedy Heights a couple of years ago when I first moved from California. I am a student at Herzing College and will be graduating this September with a bachelor’s in Computer Networking Technology. I will be maintaining and supporting computers here at the center, including the computer lab.

One of the technology coordinator’s goals is ensuring efficient technology available for everyone. We are planning to reorganize and upgrade all the PCs in the computer lab to meet everyone’s needs. Please stop by and have some fun. I will be hosting a computer class this summer for youths and adults. I encourage everyone to come and learn something new. This is a free class and it’s only here to benefit everyone. I look forward to getting to know everyone!

Computer Classes Starting this Summer

Confused about computers? Interested in the internet? Excited about email? Then be part of "Computer Crash Courses," slated to begin late June. If these ultra beginning classes would be of benefit to you, please let us know what sort of instruction you’d like and what times/days work best for you. We’d like to make this as easy and fun as possible! Call Alyssa Kenney or Lo Chang at 244-0767 with your preferences.

Even More Pictures From Spring Fling

Wish List

15-passenger van
Digital camera
Paper towel rolls
Big rolls of paper
Quality children’s books
Occupational dress-up clothes
10—60 piece puzzles
Winter gloves
Non-perishable food items
Hand soap
Dish soap
Volleyballs
Soccer balls
Four square balls
Pencils w/ erasers
Calculators
Letter size manila folders

Newsletter

Editor: Alyssa Kenney
Contributing Writers: Lo Chang, Pazee Yang, Cory Raymond, Dale Maxfield, Raven Gary, David Yang, Kevin Hongmanivanh, Jody Schmitz, Evan Yang, Deronde Gully, Tchia Thao, Nakia Gully, Monique Howard, Rakia Miles, Brittany Grisby, La'Bria Ross, Cora Williams, Christina Yang, Kelly Hongmanivahn, Kyle Kozelka, Roy LaValley and Alyssa Kenney

Photo Credits: Roy LaValley, Dan LaValley, Alyssa Kenney and Lisa DuChateau
Kennedy Heights Youth Program will offer a free eight week summer program for youth entering 5th—9th grades. The program begins Monday June 23rd and ends Friday August 15th. The program will close July 4th. The summer program will operate from 12:00—4:15 PM and will include lunch and snack. Each day youth will participate in enrichment and recreation activities, such as swimming, sports, art, cooking, technology, music and nature activities. Sign up forms are available at the community center and allow youth to choose summer activities that interest them. Space is limited to 30 youth and current program participants will have priority. Call Roy, youth program coordinator, at 244-0767 for more information and to get enrollment papers.

Summer Programming Opportunities

**KHCC Summer Program**

Kennedy Heights Youth Program will offer a **free** eight week summer program for youth entering 5th—9th grades. The program begins Monday June 23rd and ends Friday August 15th. The program will close July 4th. The summer program will operate from 12:00—4:15 PM and will include lunch and snack. Each day youth will participate in enrichment and recreation activities, such as swimming, sports, art, cooking, technology, music and nature activities. Sign up forms are available at the community center and allow youth to choose summer activities that interest them. Space is limited to 30 youth and current program participants will have priority. Call Roy, youth program coordinator, at 244-0767 for more information and to get enrollment papers.

**GEMS For Children in K—5th grades**

Attention all North side families: MSCR’s Lindbergh GEMS program is now accepting registrations for the summer! This 8-week program offers an assortment of options to meet the needs of as many children as possible, including those referred for summer school. The GEMS program will include a variety of fun and enriching activities including math, reading, science & nature in the mornings and games, arts, crafts & traditions from around the world in the afternoon. There will also be a variety of special interest activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fridays are for FUN and Field Trips. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided and extended day options are available. Specific activities, times and fees are listed on the registration forms. You can pick up registration forms in the Lindbergh main office, in the gym with the MSCR Safe Haven program, and at the Kennedy Heights Community Center. For more information contact Cory Raymond, Lindbergh Safe Haven Director at 204-6541.

On Tuesday May 13th First Lady Jessica Doyle visited the Kennedy Heights’ Early Childhood Program to share two stories and bring many new books to the children and the classroom. The children were elated to have such a special visitor. When asked by the First Lady, “Who likes to read?” a chorus of 13 children responded back, “I do!” The visit and the books were an unexpected delight. Thank you First Lady Doyle.