

Town of Brookhaven

YOUTH BUREAU

Volume 2, Issue 1

September 2012

LET'S TALK YOUTH

THE TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN YOUTH BUREAU is a Division of the Department of Housing and Human Services and a Department of Town government responsible for planning and coordinating activities and services for young people up to 21 years of age in Brookhaven. We're happy to share this NEWSLETTER with you and hope it will serve to showcase some of the excellent services, opportunities and supports available to young people in the Town.

The Youth Bureau is funded by the Town, Suffolk County and New York State Office of Children and Family Services. We provide a wide variety of youth development, counseling and community service programming in cooperation with 18 contracted not-for-profit youth agencies (listed below). We oversee and monitor these agencies and work collaboratively with them to provide a safety net for youth.

Atlantic Boxing Club - 839-4148
Boys & Girls Club of Bellport - 286-9090
Boys & Girls Club of Suffolk County - 675-1615
Colonial Youth & Family Services - 281-4461
Comsewogue Youth Club - 473-8463
Family Counseling Service - 205-5820
Family Service League - 924-3741
Fed. of Org. Foster Grandparent Program - 321-8229
Lifeline Mediation Center - 205-5054

Moriches Community Center, Inc. - 878-3267
North Shore Youth Council - 744-0207
Patchogue/Medford Youth & Community Services - 758-4100
RESPONSE of Suffolk County - 751-7420
Sachem Community & Youth Services - 585-1811
Selden/Centereach Youth Association - 732-2186
Sunshine Prevention Center - 476-3099
YMCA Wm Floyd Project - 281-6114
Youth Awareness, Inc. - 732-1133



JULY JEANS FOR TEENS

During the summer, the Sanctuary Program sponsored a *July Jeans for Teens* drive. Due to the generosity of Town of Brookhaven employees and families in the Three Village School District, over **120 pairs** of new and gently used jeans were donated to homeless shelters in Bellport and Port Jefferson Station. We thank everyone who participated for taking the time to bring in their clothing.

INTERFACE - - "Helping our Community"

THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE



It's that time of the year again when we start to think of the holiday season and plan our family's big dinner. Join us in helping needy families enjoy a Happy Holiday Season by donating to the INTERFACE Thanksgiving Food Drive. The number of Brookhaven residents experiencing difficulty affording basic food items over the past year has steadily increased. Through this town-wide food drive we hope to be able to provide all the residents of Brookhaven with Thanksgiving Dinner for their families. **Suggested items are:** All non-perishables including but not limited to canned soups, canned cranberry sauce, turkey gravy, stuffing mix, instant potatoes, canned sweet or white potatoes, rice, pudding, Jell-O, canned vegetables, jarred/canned sauce, macaroni, canned fruit, cookie mix, cake mix, icing, and juice.

Due to refrigeration requirements, we cannot accept frozen turkeys. We could, however, use \$10.00 Gift Certificates to a local supermarket where the family can purchase a turkey to complete their meal.

During these turbulent economic times, it's important to help the less fortunate. By supporting these families in need, we support our entire community. Please help us help others.

Drop Off Locations: Henrietta Acampora Recreation Center (Blue Point Cottage), 39 Montauk Highway, Blue Point; and Town Hall Lobby, 1 Independence Hill, Farmingville

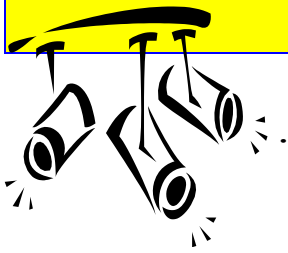
For further information, or if you know of a family in need, contact Maria Polak at 451-8014.

32nd Annual Volunteer Awards

Held on May 9, plaques and certificates of appreciation were given to 16 individuals and service groups of many kinds that gave their time and skills in service to the youth of Brookhaven Town. There were refreshments, decorative plants supplied by the Town's Highway Department (Ecology Site) and entertainment by *Autumn's Tuesday*, with guitar and vocals by Brian Moreira, former recipient, and Billy Cicotto, one of that night's recipients. Chief of Staff Brian Beedenbender gave the introductory speech. These volunteers make us grateful for a wonderful reason to enjoy a lovely evening.



Sanctuary Program



**HIGHLIGHTING ONE OF OUR PROGRAMS THIS MONTH, WE
THROW THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE YOUTH BUREAU'S VERY OWN
SANCTUARY DEPARTMENT!**

**Due to severe budget cuts, counseling services may not continue
past December 31, 2012.**

The Brookhaven Youth Bureau Sanctuary Program offers counseling, crisis intervention and case management to adolescents and their families who reside in the Township of Brookhaven. Our staff is comprised of licensed Psychiatric Clinical Social Workers who also have their "R" Psychotherapy Privileges.

We deal with issues of: Home/family/school stress; mental health diagnoses; self-injurious behavior; homelessness and runaway prevention; suicide assessment and intervention; bullying prevention; substance abuse referrals; child abuse and neglect; and legal and medical assistance. We work in conjunction with 18 school districts, CPS, DSS, Family Court, Suffolk County Probation Dept., Alternatives for Youth program, Sheriff's Dept., local youth agencies, homeless shelters, religious organizations, substance abuse treatment facilities, hospitals and psychiatrists.

We have featured support/therapeutic groups for youth: *It's a Guy Thing; Girl Talk; Bullying and Beyond; Anger Management; Parent Support Group; and Substance Abuse Awareness.*

The Sanctuary program serves as a placement site for Masters level student interns.

For more information call 631.451.8011.

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The Admirable Garden
(with permission from a Sanctuary client)

The grass is so dark green and feels very moist.

The sun is so brilliant and radiant when I see it.

The dirt and moisture have an earthy smell,

I scent flowers and nature in the air.

The cherry tree is so elevated and is like the color of snow.

A cold breeze hits me, I see flowers starting to bloom into a stunning and splendid color.

The birds are so sky-high, then they start to vanish somewhere else when they hear people coming towards the garden.

The garden around me is exquisite and something very admirable.

Nicole Acosta

Hundreds of Teens Enjoy Three Safe Summer Programs in 2012

The Town of Brookhaven and the Suffolk County Police Department, along with local supporters, offered three programs where teens could safely congregate and socialize on recent summer evenings. The programs were offered in Bellport, Mastic and Mount Sinai and hosted hundreds of different youth, many of whom attended regularly. The sites were open early July through mid-August, each operating on a varied schedule.

- The program at Bellport hosted an average of 100 youths each night. It was supported by the Boys and Girl's Club of Bellport, in addition to the Youth Bureau and the SCPD. Youth enjoyed hanging out with their friends, the music of local DJ Wade John, basketball, refreshments and some special event nights.
- The Mastic program also drew youth that enjoyed playing basketball, listening to music, and got involved in a mural contest hosted by Colonial Youth and Family Services, and presentations by the Mastic Moriches Shirley Library and YMCA Mastic Outreach Project. Town Councilman Dan Panico sponsored the second annual 3 on 3 basketball tournament at the site this year (see photo). He was joined by Senator Lee Zeldin, Chief of Staff Brian Beedenbender and Party 105 radio DJ Vic Latino. The kids had a blast and it was a great night!
- At Cedar Beach in Mount Sinai, music enthusiasts came out in large numbers to hear dozens of local teen bands that played under the stars.

The programs are meant to provide places to get together with friends in a drug and alcohol free zone. The cooperation of the Suffolk County Police Department, Town of Brookhaven Code Enforcement and Parks Department, and all of the community organizations is an essential component of the success of this project. Some sample evaluation comments from participants said: "The program is good because it gives me a safe place to go." "The Staff helps me with my problems, and the Police keep us safe."

REGENERATION SUMMER CAMP ENDS ON A HIGH NOTE!

After five weeks of fun, friendship, rain and heat, another year has come to a close with both campers and counselors expressing sadness and the promises to return next year to a great program. Tales of face painting, baseball, tie dyeing tee shirts, the crab crawl, going under the sprinklers, the Coast Guard, guide dogs, and having sent cards and supplies to our services members on the USS Iwo Jima, will keep everyone talking through the winter in anticipation of next summer. When asked what they liked best, campers replied, "The Playground", "Tie Dyeing", "My Counselor", "My Friends", "Doing Crafts", "Everything"--it all comes down to having fun in a safe, friendly environment. The parents' answer was simple when asked the same question: "Having a **ZERO DOLLAR** program that offered their children a safe place to have fun during the summer was great in these economically trying times." This year we incorporated a reading program, "ReGeneration Reads" into our weekly schedule. We were fortunate to get volunteers from the Foster Grandparent program. Some of our Town Council members joined in on the fun and read to the campers.



MORE YOUTH HAPPENINGS

An article by Vanessa Pavelock, one of our ReGeneration Camp program's employees, published in the Tri Hamlet News on August 25:

Students often associate the summertime with fun, excitement, and freedom. They have the opportunity to take a break from school and focus their energy elsewhere. The problem is that the summer often becomes a time where students digress immensely. Their social exchanges are limited, they attend few educational events, and ultimately they forget how to act in a public atmosphere with other children. For this reason, programs such as the Town of Brookhaven Regeneration Camp are essential to a child's development throughout the summer months. This camp program provides children with free choice fun, structured presentations from a variety of community speakers, and tons of time to engage with other children.

The Regeneration Camp has four locations throughout Brookhaven Town, including the Shirley Airport Camp. The free 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. camp program attracts many working class families. These families are incredibly appreciative to receive childcare four hours a day for five weeks. This summer, the Regeneration Camp has continued to thrive through one of the warmest summer seasons in Long Island history. The adaptable and enthusiastic staff and campers have allowed this program to survive yet another summer season of fun and developing new experiences.

The Perspective from a Senior Recreation Aide

Tom's Perspective.... It's another incredibly warm July day at Diamond in the Pines. ReGeneration is in full swing for the day, and I find myself out on the soccer field organizing a game of Capture the Flag. In the midst of making up teams, I see a seven-year-old boy in the distance sprinting towards us. I assume, of course, he wants to join the game, and wait on him with the rest of the kids. On the contrary, he had his own reasons for the impromptu visit.

"Guess what, guys," he says, more effectively getting the group's attention in two seconds than I had in ten minutes, "my older brother just got the tip of an elephant trunk." The kids are all ears and impressed, and I'm left somewhat at a loss for a beat or two. "Oh," it finally registers, "you mean the ivory from the tusk... the white stuff?" "Yeah," the boy confirms, "it's all real and everything. He got it on his trip."

More 'oohs' and 'ahhs' from the kids as the boy continues to grin wildly, thrilled that his friends are as excited by his brother's good fortune as he is. "That's really cool," I say. "He must have gone someplace really exotic to get it, huh?" "Oh, he did," said the boy in a tone that suggested I should brace myself for the magnitude of this destination.

"Yeah, where?" I ask, as thoroughly invested as the kids at this point. "New Jersey," he says proudly, and runs off, presumably to tell others the good news.

It's moments like that which keep me coming back to the ReGeneration program every summer, and I'm sure the kids feel the same way. I've been working at Diamond in the Pines for six summers, and the goal of the program is simple: To provide kids with a safe place to be themselves and grow with one another. The Town of Brookhaven has developed a program where kids play and learn on a daily basis, but I find at the end of each summer, it's not just the kids who wind up with an education. I've taken a lot from this program over the years and I can say from the shores of Long Island to the far off land of New Jersey, I'm grateful and proud to be a part of ReGeneration.

CAUGHT DOING SOMETHING GREAT!

Mastic Youth Leaders Produce Art and Video Showing Off the Tri Hamlet Communities

On August 15 the Mastic Leaders Club, a group of approximately 30 youth working with the YMCA William Floyd Project, produced a showcase of art and short films depicting the strengths of their community. The young people and the Program Director of the program, Helene Purdoski, hosted close to 100 community members and guests for the event. They were proud to welcome Senator Lee Zeldin to share the fruits of their labor. Members of the William Floyd Community Summit, Brookhaven Youth Bureau, Lorraine Squires and Tom Casper of the Library, Clarence Sheppard from the Black Media Foundation, and Jerri Castillo, receiver of a grant from the Huntington Arts Council and JP Morgan. Many other organizations were also on hand to celebrate the project.

The works included youth-produced films that showed clips of the many attributes of the hamlets of Shirley, Mastic and Mastic Beach. Featured in the films were the beach, the library, the Mastic Athletic Center and Skate Park, favorite dining and convening spots, and much more. The films also featured young people and community members speaking about all that is right about the area. Their art work will also be placed on display at the Mastics Moriches Shirley Library.

The YMCA Leaders Club (local teens, 13 and over), is extremely active, and meets weekly at the Mastic Recreation Center. The members focus on increasing their own leadership skills, and providing community service. They have also been mentoring a younger group of youth, ages 9 to 12, the *'Tween Club*.

What a win for the community! The YMCA Mastic Leaders Club is an excellent example of teens spending their time *doing something great!* We are happy to “catch them in the act” and share their good works with you!



CURRENT SCHEDULED EVENTS

DUE TO 2013 BUDGET UNCERTAINTIES, WE ARE UNABLE TO ANNOUNCE YOUTH BUREAU PROGRAMS FOR THE FALL AND WINTER AT THIS TIME. PLEASE CHECK OUT THE YOUTH BUREAU WEBSITE AT WWW.BROOKHAVEN.ORG, AND VISIT FACEBOOK AT WWW.BROOKHAVEN.ORG/YOUTHFACEBOOK; OR CALL THE YOUTH BUREAU AT 451.8011.

Learn To Be... Tobacco Free

The Suffolk County Department of Health is conducting a six-week smoking cessation program starting Monday, October 15, 2012 at 6:00 pm at Brookhaven Town Hall (second floor conference room near the Youth Bureau), One Independence Hill, Farmingville 11738.

Dates are October 15, 22, 29, November 5, 19, 26 and a follow-up reunion on December 17.

Techniques in Stress Management, Behavior Modification, and Relaxation are some skills needed to stay tobacco free. They will be covered, and medication will be provided for a nominal fee of \$50.

To register or for more information, e-mail youthbureau@brookhaven.org with your name and all contact numbers; or call 451-8011.

Donna's Corner

Youth Funding—What's it Worth?????



Donna Napoli, Acting Director

Gladys Carrion, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), estimates a cost of approximately \$240,000 PER YEAR to incarcerate or place in detention ONE YOUTH. Youth Bureau and Agency programs are frontline prevention of such placements. What are these prevention programs worth? With the continuing revenue

and budget crisis, should all Town Youth Programs cease to exist? For years we've been told to do more with less, and we have; we've been forced to. There are more hurting kids, more disconnected kids and more families in crisis. And way, way less funding. Recently it's begun to feel that we are asked to do more with basically, almost, nothing.

Clearly, this is not possible. I hope that everyone reading this will help support the continuation of youth programs and services at the Brookhaven Town Youth Bureau. I am proud of the innovative, dedicated youth professionals with whom I've worked at the Town Youth Bureau over these past 20+ years—and I am proud of all the young people whom I've had the privilege to observe as they make their lives better and our communities that much stronger.

In my eyes, priceless....

The Town of Brookhaven Youth Bureau is funded by the Town, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, and the County of Suffolk. The Brookhaven Youth Bureau is a Long Island Regional member of the New York State Association of Youth Bureaus.

TOWN of BROOKHAVEN

Department of Housing & Human Services

Youth Bureau

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