RSVP
Lead With Experience
of Madison County

Volunteer Impact Newsletter

March 2010

RSVP of Madison County
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Mary Bartlett, ext. #103 Director
Eileen Augustyn, ext. #115 Coordinator

From our Director…

Dear Volunteers and Volunteer Station leaders,

United Way and Community Chest contributors help RSVP volunteers help others

Sincere thanks, from the RSVP Advisory Council members and volunteers and myself, to all of you who have generously donated to the United Way of Greater Oneida, and the Community chests of Canastota, Hamilton, Town of Sullivan and the United Community Chest of the Towns of Cazenovia, Fenner & Nelson.

Your United Way and Community chest contribution supports so many worthwhile organizations that have a positive impact on our community. RSVP, as a United Way and Community Chest recipient, works to strengthen our communities through volunteer service. RSVP encourages, recruits, places, and supports volunteers. As a result, more than 600 RSVP volunteers provided over 64,000 hours of valuable service last year through RSVP sponsored programs and dedicated not-for-profit organizations throughout Madison county.

RSVP volunteers are actively involved in the county in many capacities, such as: exercise leaders, advocates, medical appointment drivers, literacy tutors, tax preparers, Board members and advisors, community event and project assistants, youth mentors, and so many more valuable positions too numerous to list!

RSVP continues its commitment to making a positive impact on the quality of life in Madison County through our work with volunteers. Thank You kindly to all donors and Board Members of the United Way and Community Chests throughout the area that help make Madison County so strong.

Your sharing and caring truly makes a difference.

Sincerely,
Mary Bartlett
Mary Bartlett
RSVP Director

Thank You RSVP Volunteers!!

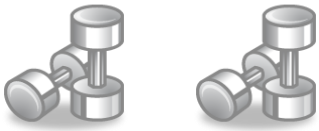
You have contributed 9,863 hours from December 2009 - February 2010!!

Marilyn Aronson
Roberta Avery
Kathy Bice
Donna Bocketti
James Brower
Stephen Burrell
Janet Davis
Judith DeBarr
Catherine Elliott
Virginia Green
Molly Hall
Barbara Hipsley
Roy Jones
Gloria McGuire
Ruth Ogden
Marcia Parker
William Parker
Virginia Plumley
Veneta Preston
Kathleen Richmond
Karen Sherbeck
Jean Shirley
Bonnie Slocum
Marie Smith
Sharon Tornatore-Sgroi

Are Your Taxes Done Yet?

Don't forget RSVP does taxes free of charge for Madison County residents over age 60.
Call us at 684-3001 to set up your appointment today!

Bone Builders Buzz



14 of your determined & spirited Bone Builders Exercise group leaders braved the bad weather threats to meet on February 24th to develop ideas for our exercise program. Some of the topics that leaders discussed were: "best practices" of our exercise groups, ideas for topics for our next "all Bone Builders" workshop, and improved informational hand outs. We learned about the upcoming Safe Pill Drop off and will be giving presentations at Bone Builder Groups in March.

Thank you to all who were able to join us for this meeting. We look forward to sharing information from this meeting with all our wonderful Bone Builders leaders.

A few Bone Builders changes to note:

- A new group is meeting at Oneida Tower 1 at 10 AM on Tuesdays. There are openings for participants in this group. It's a great opportunity for Towers residents to enjoy a Free exercise opportunity. You are welcome to attend.
- Hamilton Bone Builders now meet at the Cornerstone Baptist Church on West Lake Rd. at 10 AM on Wednesdays.
- The DeRuyter group will soon be restarting at the Legion Hall at 10 AM on Tuesdays.
- Brookfield will be restarting their group in March at the Baptist Church. You are invited.
- The Canastota group which meets on Mondays at the Stoneleigh apartments has openings for new participants.

Feel free to call RSVP ext. 115 for more information about these wonderful exercise opportunities.

- **Note to all former exercisers: If you have any RSVP weights collecting dust, please return them to your group leader or to RSVP. We are eager to get weights returned so that we can continue to provide Free weights to any new exercise participants. Thank you.**

CWEG Water Talk

Local Volunteers Play Huge Role At Pool

By April Cady, Administrator

I got a call the other day from RSVP asking for my sheet with the logged hours our volunteers here at the Chenango Water Exercise Group (CWEG) put in at the pool. RSVP keeps track of these statistics and yearly lets us know how many hours our instructors have accumulated. It reminded me that we really "couldn't do it without them." When I get a copy of the numbers it is really very amazing the time that is dedicated to making CWEG run so efficiently!

Our loyal band of volunteers is the heartbeat of CWEG. They do yeoman duty, conduct classes, work with people one-on-one, and serve on the board. An organization such as ours relies so heavily on the generosity of its members and these participants are at the top of the list!

Even though people have been in a class for years, they are very upset when "their" leader isn't available and they have to fill in. Having the trained volunteer teaching the class makes everyone much more comfortable and I think they tend to work a little harder.

The next goal for our volunteers is to create a manual to help them keep up with the latest trends in aquatic exercise and provide a blueprint for training future volunteers. It will be used as a reference of all the things we do here at CWEG in terms of exercises and their benefits.

But, in the meantime, it behooves me to once again say a great big thank you to the volunteers here at CWEG. Their dedication and reliability are very much appreciated by me as well as the rest of the membership. We can't say it enough or in a better forum. Thanks, a million times, thanks!

LTC OMBUDSMAN/ ADVOCATES CORNER

Thank you Ombudsmen for all your caring efforts. Our next Ombudsman team meeting will be held on March 10th at Cornell Cooperative Extension in Morrisville. We will be joined by Gregory Novack, our Assistant State Ombudsman. Our meetings are always a great fellowship and learning experience.

* * *

The Madison County Ombudsman group invites you to join their volunteer team. Ombudsmen work with residents in long term care facilities to help ensure their rights. Ombudsmen find satisfaction in the work they do helping others and also learn a great deal about topics covered through trainings and through regular meetings and workshops which are offered to the team throughout the year.

NYS Ombudsman Certification Training helps to prepare volunteers for their role as an advocate. The next 36 hour NYS certification training will be held at the Utica Red Cross on April 27 & 29 and May 4, 6, 11, & 13.

If you are interested, please call RSVP ext.115 to learn more about this opportunity.

* * *

Also, if you would like to speak with an Ombudsman feel free to call RSVP.

Our new Bone Builders leaders have been established in several of the Exercise Groups offered throughout Madison County. They have added some great support and enthusiasm since they were trained in November 2009. Thank you BB volunteers!

Featured Program… Youth Mentoring

Community Action Partnership Mentoring Program

By Sharon Tornatore-Sgroi, Youth Mentor

I began mentoring when I decided to recreate my life. I retired early and had a successful marriage...2 things that most people only dream of! I was lucky and worked hard at both! But the hand of luck does have it's price sometimes...and for reasons we might never know.

Sharon and her Mentee Jennifer Cornish

Within a month of my retirement, and within a 2-week period of time I lost my Husband and my Mother. I just didn't know what to do with my life. My own grandchildren were born very lucky - born to 8 - yes, 8 LIVING GRANDPARENTS of an extended family! So, needless to say they have had everything with lots of competing grandparents!

So I ventured into mentoring and what I received from mentoring was a gift. The gift of reaching out to someone who just needs someone to spend time with, to hangout, to do things that they haven't had the privilege of doing, to show them how important communication is, to act as a sounding-board for all of the complicated things in their lives.

Mentoring is NOT about helping the poor - it's about giving hope and friendship, being a rock in a child's world - perhaps one with a shaky foundation.

I came from a poor family - we were poor, but we were proud. We lived without having everything - but we had good communication and demonstrative love. It wasn't fear-based poverty like it seems to be today - the stress of the economy ravaging family incomes, peer pressure of having too much in this very material world, little time for quality family time; and sometimes ALL of that compounded by rampant drug and alcohol use in our culture. When I grew up in poverty - the rest of the world was ok. The rest of the world is not ok for families with children today.

I like being a friend to my mentee - I like inspiring her that there is hope in a hopeless world, I like offering my hand to her when we cross the street - to let her know that I enjoy and need to be with her for a little while, it's safe and we can have fun and exhale and talk about our troubles or explore the computer or exercise and leave the world behind for a few hours.

In mentoring, you will get MUCH MORE than you expected, as I have. It's important because you can do very insignificant activities that may bring some peace to a small child and even change the world for them. It's powerful stuff! It's not the giving… it's the receiving that will shake your world! My generation of baby-boomers certainly wanted to change a lot of things in society… and I have found that mentoring is my way of being a part of the prevailing motto 'Be the Change'.

Community Action Partnership's Mentoring Program reaches out to approximately 40 Madison County youth each year, bringing activities like skating, baking, going to the library or as Sharon says, "Just hanging out." Mentors inspire and educate the youth in the area. If you have as little as one hour a week to give to a local youth in your area mentoring may be for you. Please call JoAnne Morak Mentoring Program Coordinator at 315-697-3588 X11.

Fabric Fun Day

Madison County 4-H is holding a **Fabric Fun Day on Saturday, March 27** at the Morrisville-Eaton High School Home Economics suite. The day will start at 10:00 am and end at 1:15 pm. Lunch will be included. The youth will be working on several interesting fabric projects – some require sewing, some do not. The projects include: Bandana Backpacks (simple sewing), Recycled Jeans Pockets (need to sew one seam and do some stenciling – easy!), Chef's apron and hat (full day project – all the kids should already have some sewing experience – working from a pattern, gathering, turning ties), Traveling Pillowcase (making a simple pillowcase and adding padded handles – some sewing experience helpful), Draft stoppers (from a pair of tights – no sewing, just lots of fun decorating them – see photos below). During the break (11:00 am to 12:15 pm) they will have several options as well as tacos for lunch. They can do ribbon barrettes (no sewing), decorative hangers (no sewing), water bottle strap (minimal sewing), Fabric Frisbees (simple sewing) or they can work on a quilt square for the Golisano Children's Hospital.

We need at least 6 volunteers to help with the projects. We have enough for the quilt squares and one for the apron/ chef's hat project. Please call Peg at 684-3001 ext, 116 if you have questions or would like to volunteer.

The more adults available, the more fun the kids will have! And the nicer their projects will look!

Sponsored by: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County, A Corporation for National & Community Service Agency,
Also Supported by: NYSOFA, the United Way of Greater Oneida, and the Community Chests of Canastota, Hamilton, Town of Sullivan, and the United Community Chest of the Towns of Cazenovia, Fenner, & Nelson, and other contributors.

RSVP
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Morrisville, NY 13408

Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Madison County

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Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Safe Pill Drop-Off Coming April 24 from 10 am – 2 pm at the Madison County Landfill

Free Collection & Disposal of Waste Medication & Pharmaceuticals. Clean out your medicine cabinets and properly dispose of expired and unwanted medications. This includes over-the-counter pills, vitamins and even supplements. For Madison County residents only. Please bring waste medication in original containers when able.

Why do we need a "Safe Pill Drop-Off"? Why not just flush?? Two reasons… 1. Reduce availability of prescription drugs to lessen potential for misuse or abuse. * 10% of Madison County 11th & 12th graders report using narcotic painkillers for non-medical reasons. *Source-2009 American Drug and Alcohol Survey, Madison County's Promise-The Alliance for Youth.* * Nationwide, emergency room visits due to abuse of prescription drugs are greater than the number of visits due to the abuse of marijuana and heroin combined! *Source-Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.* **2. Flushed medications can get into our lakes, rivers and streams. Keep pharmaceuticals out of our water.** A number of studies have shown male fish have been feminized (produced eggs) when exposed to hormones (birth control pills) and Other drugs, such as anti-depressants and beta-blockers, reduce fertility or affect spawning in certain aquatic organisms. *Source-Department of Environmental Conservation.*

Want to help? Volunteers are signing up now to help with this important program. We need people to: help get the word out – post flyers, give presentations to community groups, help with check-in on the day of the event. If you are interested please give Mary Bartlett at call at RSVP 684-3001.