



Newsletter

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School Year to Summer Switch Means Big Move

These guys aren't "two men and a truck" but they might as well be. Dane Region Program Director Andrew Stuht and Camp Program Director Jason Anderson spend the last few days of the school year in Madison in a carefully choreographed dance that requires moving a lot of equipment from one place to another and timing it so the children in Wisconsin Youth Company's AFTER SCHOOL and summer camp programs have the stuff they need to be safe and have fun.

"I've done this seven times," said Stuht. "Once you get the technique down it's not so bad."

Here's how it works: Anderson gives Stuht a list of the equipment he needs for the eight summer camps that WYC operates in Dane County each summer.



Andrew Stuht, left, and Jason Anderson become "two men and a truck" for one day of moving equipment.

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AFTER SCHOOL Site Closings Follow a System

When the school year ends and kids take off for their summer vacations it's not just a matter of closing and locking the door to the 40 AFTER SCHOOL programs in Dane and Waukesha counties. It's a bit more complicated.

"Site supervisors have to do an inventory of all their stuff," said Lisa Cavern, a Community Director for the Dane Region. "There are a lot of things to remember."

Because not all site supervisors return to their sites each year, information about basic things such as the location of the phone jack and the site refrigerator has to be listed. Everything must be cleaned including refrigerators and storage cabinets. Supervisors must inventory all games, sports equipment, arts and crafts supplies, snack and cooking equipment and supplies and other materials like rugs and

bean bag chairs. A variety of administrative equipment must be turned in: cell phones, walkie-talkies, first aid kits and keys to cupboards and storage units.

"Supervisors got their list about three to four weeks prior to checkout so they had a chance to prepare and work on things over time," said Cavern.

Community directors supervise a cluster of sites in Dane and Waukesha Regions. All sites must be inspected by community directors before closing. On the day after programs end supervisors drop off administrative materials such as registration binders, attendance sheets and checkbooks.

"For new supervisors especially it can be a lot to deal with," said Cavern. "That's why community directors offer to come out and help."



Community Director Lisa Cavern, right, checks Shorewood Site Supervisor Barb Townsend out for the end of the school year.



The most popular incentive has been the Kwik Trip card

Crowded Parking Lot Calls for Incentives

If you've ever tried to visit the Wisconsin Youth Company (WYC) administrative offices on McKenna Blvd. in Madison on a Tuesday or a Thursday you know how hard it is to find a parking place. Those are high traffic days. On Tuesdays the West Side Senior Coalition has its weekly senior Lunch Bunch in the building. Space is needed for parking for those seniors who drive themselves to the lunch and space is needed for the van to drop off other seniors, some using wheelchairs. Tuesday is also snack pickup day for the AFTER SCHOOL site supervisors. Some of the larger programs load up big cases of bananas and apples. The loading zone spots near the back door are especially popular on snack pickup days. Thursdays are crowded because the site supervisors return for their

weekly meeting which usually lasts two hours. Administrative staff who work inside the building also need parking space as do parents stopping by to pay tuition or sign their children up for various programs.

Now there is incentive for Wisconsin Youth Company staff to park outside the lot. WYC owns the land between its building and Griff's restaurant, including two rows of the parking lot at Griff's Restaurant. From Griff's it's a short walk up the hill to WYC. To encourage staff to park at Griff's, \$3 gift cards are given out to everyone who parks there on Tuesdays or Thursdays. The cards are for local restaurants or gas stations. Of course if you're trying to work more exercise into your life, parking at Griff's may be incentive enough. That hill is steep!

Staff Benefits Help with Retention, Recruitment

Health and dental insurance, paid planning and prep time and a large resource and equipment library are just three of the benefits available to employees of Wisconsin Youth Company's AFTER SCHOOL division. "We believe in investing in our employees because that translates into good care for the children," said AFTER SCHOOL Division Director Joanne Bonesho.

AFTER SCHOOL competes with many other school age programs in Dane and Waukesha Counties to hire and retain staff for its 40-plus program sites. Not only must employees have experience working with children but they must have the energy and passion for being around kids three to five hours a day. Most of the work is part time since the program is provided during non school hours. It can be difficult to attract people to part time positions that also carry the responsibility of providing safe, enriching programs for groups of active youngsters.

Employees working for AFTER SCHOOL at least 20 hours a week have access to health and dental insurance, something that is not a typical benefit for part time employees in the school age child care industry. Supervisors also get paid for planning and preparation time. Staff don't just show up for programs.

They meet and plan the activities that they will do with the children. They also have a set up and take down time before and after program so that materials and equipment can be arranged before the children arrive and stored after they go home. Getting paid for this time is also not typical in the school age child care industry. Some of the site supervisor positions are 30-40 hours weekly and that includes only 15-25 hours of actual in-ratio time with children. The remainder of the hours are used to pick up snack, shop for supplies for a special activity and attend meetings, all paid time.

Resources are another benefit available to AFTER SCHOOL employees. Everyone knows you can't teach and entertain children without lots of interesting equipment, supplies and ideas for fun things to do. AFTER SCHOOL maintains a large library of books and activity kits, all of it posted online. Staff can access the online library and reserve items ranging from a book about dealing with behavior challenges to a kit with complete candle making supplies.

Perhaps the best resource available to AFTER SCHOOL staff is people. In the next newsletter you will be introduced to all of the administrative employees who support staff.

“ We believe in investing in our employees because that translates into good care for the children. ”

Wisconsin Youth Company Adopts New Mission & Purpose Statements

The following ends statements were adopted by the Wisconsin Youth Company board at its July meeting:

“Wisconsin Youth Company exists so that the children of Wisconsin benefit from communities that nurture them, at a sustainable cost.

Children benefit from growing up in communities in which:

- 1) There are safe and secure places to be a child outside their homes and schools.
- 2) Caring adult role models regularly interact with them.
- 3) There is encouragement and guidance for wider community engagement, the exploration and pursuit of individual interests, and educational support and enrichment.
- 4) Resources are available for exploring and pursuing their individual interests.

- 5) Resources are available for educational support and enrichment.

Until 2012 children are defined as K-12 with highest priority for K-8 in Dane and Waukesha Counties.”

The board developed the ends statement at its retreat in April.

“The board leads the organization on behalf of the community,” said Nancy Goodell, Executive Director. “Ends statements are a way of restating the board’s role of providing vision for the organization.”

The new mission and purpose statements focus on the board’s concern for communities in our state having the resources, collaborations and shared purpose of nurturing our children. This includes WYC’s own programs as well as those offered by other community organizations and local and state public service agencies.

Area Youth Attend Middle School U Classes

This summer more than 150 youth, sixth through ninth grade will attend classes at Wisconsin Youth Company’s Middle School U program. Many of the young people are repeat campers and they come for their favorite classes, usually something to do with food and/or sports.

Classes are held for ten weeks at Jefferson Middle School on Madison’s west side. Each class runs for three hours a day for one week. Students can take one class in the morning and a second one in the afternoon if they choose. Because the students are older there is more flexibility in how they come and go. They sign themselves in and out and lunch is a relaxed hour and a half of chatting, eating and table games.

Classes are taught by instructors with special skills in the topics offered. In some cases, such as with specialized courses like rock climbing or ropes, students go off site to learn skills.

The purpose of classes is to give students real skills to use in life and leisure activities. This summer the largest classes are those associated with food or sports. They include basketball, active team sports, orienteering, canoeing and kayaking, ice cream creations and international cooking. Also popular are the American Red Cross babysitting class, bowling and digital photography.

Last summer 167 different youth attended one or more Middle School U classes for a total attendance of 715. Youth came from 35 different schools. Seventy-eight were boys and 89 were girls.

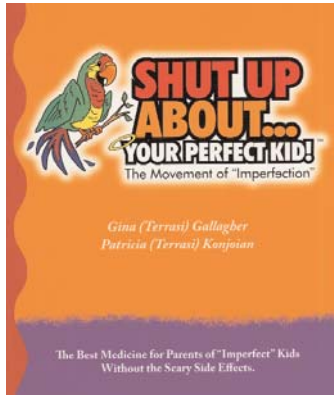
The Program Coordinator is former AFTER SCHOOL site supervisor and current WYC Resource Coordinator Georgene Pitzner. The MSU Camp Director is Deanne Lensert, former West Middleton AFTER SCHOOL site supervisor and currently a Baraboo middle school social studies teacher.



Wayne the Wizard’s magic students gave a performance the last day of class.



From left, Rachel, Molly and Brielle took part in the “Walking for Fun and Fitness” class.



Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid
by Gina Gallagher and Patricia
Konjoian

Funny Book Has tips for Parents, Staff

Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid by Gina Gallagher and Patricia Konjoian is a very funny book on a serious topic: children with special needs. Gallagher and Konjoian are sisters and each has a daughter with special needs. Gallagher's daughter has Asperger's Syndrome and Konjoian's daughter is bi-polar. The two women have managed to turn the most difficult aspects of raising a child with special needs into a warm, humorous and loving look at their families and what it's like

to be the parent, sibling, aunt or friend of a young person who is different.

Billing themselves as the "shut up sisters", Gallagher and Konjoian are promoting a "movement of imperfection". They want parents to learn to laugh and accept themselves and their special children. The book was purchased for the AFTER SCHOOL library to be used as a resource for staff.

Social Work Students Learn Skills at WYC

For the past two years AFTER SCHOOL has served as a field placement for University of Wisconsin social work students from the Child and Family Welfare Unit. Social work seniors and graduate students are required to spend 14 hours a week in a field placement related to their social work area of study.

Students begin by observing children's behavior then form friendships with individual children in need of support. They may help those children make friends with others or may tutor them if they need homework help. They assist with the larger group by leading

art activities, cooking or games. While no actual therapy takes place, individual children benefit from the positive one on one adult attention and the group benefits from having an additional adult to help with activities and provides an additional positive role model.

UW requires that students be supervised by people with master's degrees in social work (MSW). Writer/consultant Jean Colvin and Community Director Rich Kaye both have MSW's and will be working with the UW students for the 2007-08 school year staff.

New Theme for Celebrating Youth!

Celebrating Youth!, Wisconsin Youth Company's annual youth exhibition event will have the theme of "Other Worldly Circus" in 2008. Celebrating Youth! will be January 27, 2008 at the Monona Terrace, Madison.

WYC Events Coordinator Spyder Carneol came up with the theme when she was driving in her car turning over ideas.

"We're always looking for a theme idea that is universal and open-ended yet whimsical and fun," she said. "We want something that people can relate to."

Carneol said that when she thought of "other worldly" she first thought of outer space.

"Then I started picturing the event with lots of things that would take people out of their normal experience," said Carneol.

Carneol said she immediately pictured lots of "walk about" characters, "like from those in the movie Star Wars."

Carneol said she hoped the theme would inspire the public to become involved and attend the event in costume.

"I think of all the different worlds that we interact with," said Carneol, "the insect world and the sea world for example, and the worlds beyond our immediate perception. That's the inspiration for the 2008 Celebrating Youth!."

As in 2007, this year's event, will last two days. Day one, January 26, will feature an "Options and Alternatives in Education" conference for parents, youth and educators. Carneol, who has coordinated Celebrating Youth! for the past two years is moving to the west coast. She will return in January to help stage the event.

“We’re always looking for a theme that is universal and open-minded yet whimsical and fun.”

Silent Auction, Raffle Raises \$2,900 for Scholarships

About \$1800 in the Waukesha Region and \$1100 in the Dane Region was raised from silent auctions and raffles held at both regions' spring fairs. Waukesha's fair was March 27 and Dane's fair was April 10. At both fairs AFTER SCHOOL staff put together festive baskets filled with items relating to a theme. For example, there was a kitchen basket filled with cooking equipment and gift certificates to area grocery or specialty stores. There were also

entertainment baskets with family videos, coupons for family entertainment and refreshments like popcorn. People attending the fairs bid on the baskets "silently" by writing on sheets of paper next to the baskets. When the auction closed at 7:30 p.m. the highest bidders were the winners. Donated items were also raffled off. Scholarship funds go to low-income families who can't afford AFTER SCHOOL tuition.

Students Design Celebrating Youth! Poster

Students from West High School in Madison helped create a circus poster design for the 2008 Celebrating Youth! event.

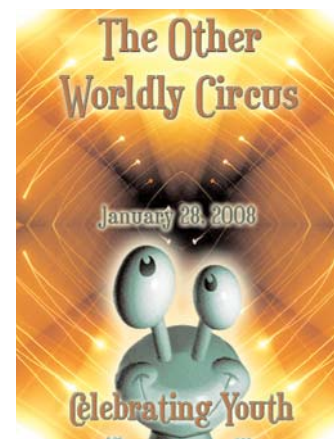
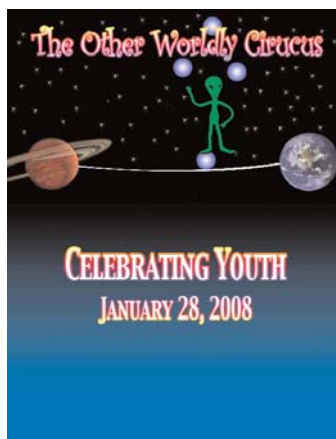
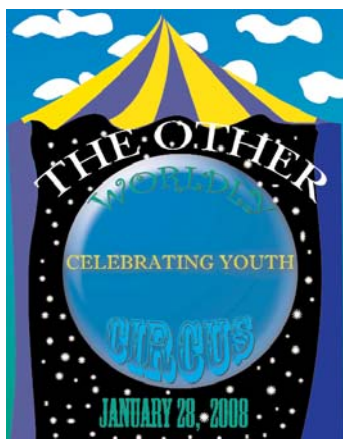
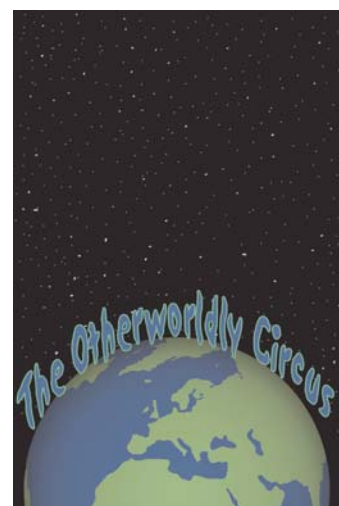
Designing the poster was made the senior project for West's Advanced Design Graphics class. Students were told to create a simple design that would speak to the 2008 theme of "Other Worldly Circus."

The definition of other worldly that students were given was resembling a world other than the actual world, devoted to preparing for a world to come or devoted to intellectual or imaginative pursuits. The poster will be used to publicize the event which is January 28, 2008.

WYC staff will judge the designs and pick one to use in promoting the event.

Twenty-one designs were submitted. Last year's winner was West High School student Grant Bilsrud who's circus tent design was used for "Hoopla Circus" the theme for the 2007 Celebrating Youth!

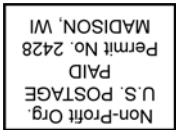
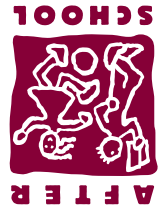
To the right and bottom are some of this year's designs.



Clockwise from top, entries from Harry Streckert, Ashley Conklin, Mei-Lien, Daniel Carnes, Matt Johnson, and Aaron Stern.

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Changeover to Summer is a Busy Time

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Stuht has a list that tells him the location of every art cart, game cart, storage cabinet and basketball in the 25 Dane AFTER SCHOOL sites.

Stuht then notifies the site that their equipment is needed and to either bring it in to the main office or prepare it for pickup. Then the dance begins. Stuht and Anderson jump into a moving van and make the rounds to the various sites and collect the equipment. In some cases, the equipment stays put because the site is an AFTER SCHOOL site during the school year like Crestwood which turns into a summer camp site called Camp of the Lakes. Equipment is brought to the gym at the main office where it is sorted. Then it is loaded onto the truck and taken to the camp site. This year the timing was especially

difficult as Madison Public Schools didn't let out for summer until Friday June 14. Meanwhile schools in the outlying areas like Waunakee and Stoughton ended the previous week. That meant that summer camp started June 11 in some areas but not until June 18 in Madison.

"Parents always ask us to provide care on the last Friday before camp starts," said Stuht. "But we just can't. We need that one day to set up our summer camps."

Stuht said that the system makes for efficient use of equipment.

"We could just have equipment and materials for summer and not have to borrow from AFTER SCHOOL sites but it doesn't make sense to have a storage unit full of stuff that sits for nine months."

Calendar

- **August 27-31**
AFTER SCHOOL staff orientation
- **September 3**
Labor Day holiday
- **September 4**
First day of AFTER SCHOOL programs
- **September 13**
Wisconsin Youth Company Board meeting 6 p.m.