January 2008

AFTER SCHOOL

Newsletter

a WISCONSIN YOUTH COMPANY program

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Celebrating Youth! Offers Day of Fun, Learning

With 31 performing groups and individuals on four stages, 25 resource groups and ten activity areas there are plenty of opportunities for fun and learning at this year's Celebrating Youth!.

The annual free event (suggested donation $1-$2) is January 27, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Monona Terrace in Madison and is sponsored by Wisconsin Youth Company, parent company of AFTER SCHOOL.

"This year's theme of 'Other Worldly' is looking at the broad variety of other worlds," said Ilana Caplan, Celebrating Youth! Coordinator. "Participants can visit different worlds such as the insect world or the world of fantasy. We have so many cultural performers that the 'Other Worldly' theme is represented there as well."

This is the ninth year for the popular event which usually attracts around 10,000 people. The event has focused on a circus theme for the past two years and this year that theme continues in part with the "The Other Worldly Circus", a finale performance with youth from the Chicago-based CircEsteem, Minneapolis jugglers the Jugheads and the Mazomanie Flyers.

Throughout the day visitors may see all types of cultural performances on the four stages from the Trinity Irish Dancers to Chinese acrobatic handkerchief dancing. Resource groups representing organizations offering services, programs and activities for youth will also be represented and many will have activities for children and youth to try out. There will also be areas where children and youth can make things to take home with them such as fairy tiaras, bubble wand necklaces and bug eye glasses.

Insect Ambassadors will have an activity area where visitors can handle live insects and the UW Space Place will be there with opportunities for visitors to learn about outer space.

"Come and entertain your family for the whole day!" said Caplan. "There's going to be lots to make, do and see."

Celebrating Youth!

Dane Sites Take Part in Puzzle Challenge

The Match Window

After two years of trivia, the Dane Region AFTER SCHOOL sites will be participating in a puzzle solving contest this winter.

"The Trivia Challenge was such a hit," said Program Director and contest designer Andrew Stuht, "but we ran through the categories kids were most likely to have knowledge of, things like UW Badger trivia and Harry Potter."

So Stuht came up with the idea of a puzzle contest. There will be nine rounds. Puzzles will be based on things like tangrams, the game of chess and matchsticks. There will be a range of difficulty so that all ages can participate.

"What I like about these kind of contests is that with these puzzles, they're all so different," said Stuht. "That means that each week different kids with different skills and knowledge will have a moment to shine."

Each round will have as many as ten puzzles to solve. Sites earn points by solving puzzles. At the end of the contest the site with the most points wins a to-be-determined prize. In previous years the prize has been an ice cream or pizza party.

Stuht spent about five to 10 hours putting the contest together. "The Internet is a really good resource for this," he said.

Fund Raiser Winner Announced, Next One Set

There will be more baskets at the next spring fundraiser.

Joseph Wojner from Holy Apostles AFTER SCHOOL in New Berlin sold $438.50 worth of fruit and fudge in the organization's fall fundraiser. He earned $450 towards a Wander Wisconsin trip of his choice.

In second place was Logan Bittner from Hawthorne AFTER SCHOOL in Madison. He sold $206.50 worth of fruit and fudge and also earned a $450 credit towards the Wander Wisconsin trip of his choice.

"Our goal was to sell $4500 worth of fruit and fudge and we exceeded that," said Kathy Smith, Wander Wisconsin Program Director. Smith said they also gave out $1490 worth of Wander Wisconsin trip credits to other youth who sold more fruit and fudge.

Seventeen youth earned $15 credits; six earned $25; four earned $35 and one earned $45.

The spring fundraiser is a raffle and silent auction held at each AFTER SCHOOL region's spring fair. The Dane Region fair is April 29. The Waukesha Region fair is April 8. Donations are solicited from area businesses and vendors. Gift baskets are bid on for the silent auction. Each AFTER SCHOOL program site and administrative office will put together a basket based on a theme such as pets, movie night or sports and those attending the fair can bid on them.

"The baskets were really popular last year," said Lisa Cavern, Dane Community Director and Dane Fair Coordinator. "People were saying they wished there were more to bid on."

Auto-Pay is Good Option for Busy Families

For busy families remembering to pay their AFTER SCHOOL bill may be a challenge. One way to deal with it is to sign up for Auto-Pay.

"Some families may not be aware that we have this option," said Kristin Hartzheim, AFTER SCHOOL Registrar.

With Auto-Pay fees can be automatically charged to families' VISA or Master Card on a monthly basis.

"There's no fee for this service," said Hartzheim.

To sign up families should look in the coupon book they got when they registered their child. There's a page authorizing Auto-Pay in the front of the book that can be filled out and mailed or dropped off at the office. If you have questions in the Dane Region contact Kristen at 608-276-9782, ext. 22. In the Waukesha Region contact Jinny at 262-547-8770, ext. 12.

Conference Speaks to Parents, Educators, Youth

Wisconsin Youth Company's second annual "Options and Alternatives in Education" has much to offer parents as well as educators and youth according to Mariah Miller, WYC Community Outreach Coordinator and organizer of the conference.

"Parents will find a lot of resources to help them support their children in their growth and education," said Miller.

The conference is a collaborative effort designed to appeal to parents, educators and youth. When Miller learned that two other groups were having educational events in the month of January, she contacted them so all could promote each other's events and to declare January "Options in Education Month." One of the organizations, Having Options in Public Education (HOPE), had a public forum with Madison School Superintendent Art Rainwater on January 8. The Unschooling Conference, a gathering for parents who are home schooling their children, was January 12. Both groups will be represented at the WYC conference on January 26.

"I realized that we were all asking the same question: How can we as adults in all areas of education help kids find their niche?" said Miller. "Some children learn best in the regular classroom; some do better with tutoring; some do better in arts-based schools and some do best being home schooled."

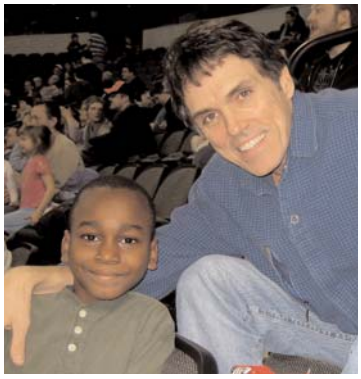
Miller has used her many community contacts to bring together a diverse group of people and organizations all concerned with supporting the many ways children and youth learn.

The conference will have 21 workshops including a number led by youth for youth. It will also have an education resource and enrichment area with more than 20 groups represented. The resource area will be located in the Grand Terrace of Monona Terrace and is free and open to the public.

Keynote for the conference is Tom Tuohy head of Dreams for Kids speaking on "Empowering Youth as Leaders in the Global Village." Tuohy is bringing youth from his Dream Leaders project to speak with him. The youth attend a magnet high school in the Chicago area.

Also part of the conference is DreamFlight an indoor mobile classroom for children and youth about space. It will be parked in front of Monona Terrace and is free and open to the public.

The conference is $75 for adults and $45 for youth. For more information visit www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org and click on the Celebrating Youth! button.



Tom Tuohy (right), keynote speaker for "Options and Alternatives in Education Conference.

> "How can adults in all areas of education help kids find their niche?"

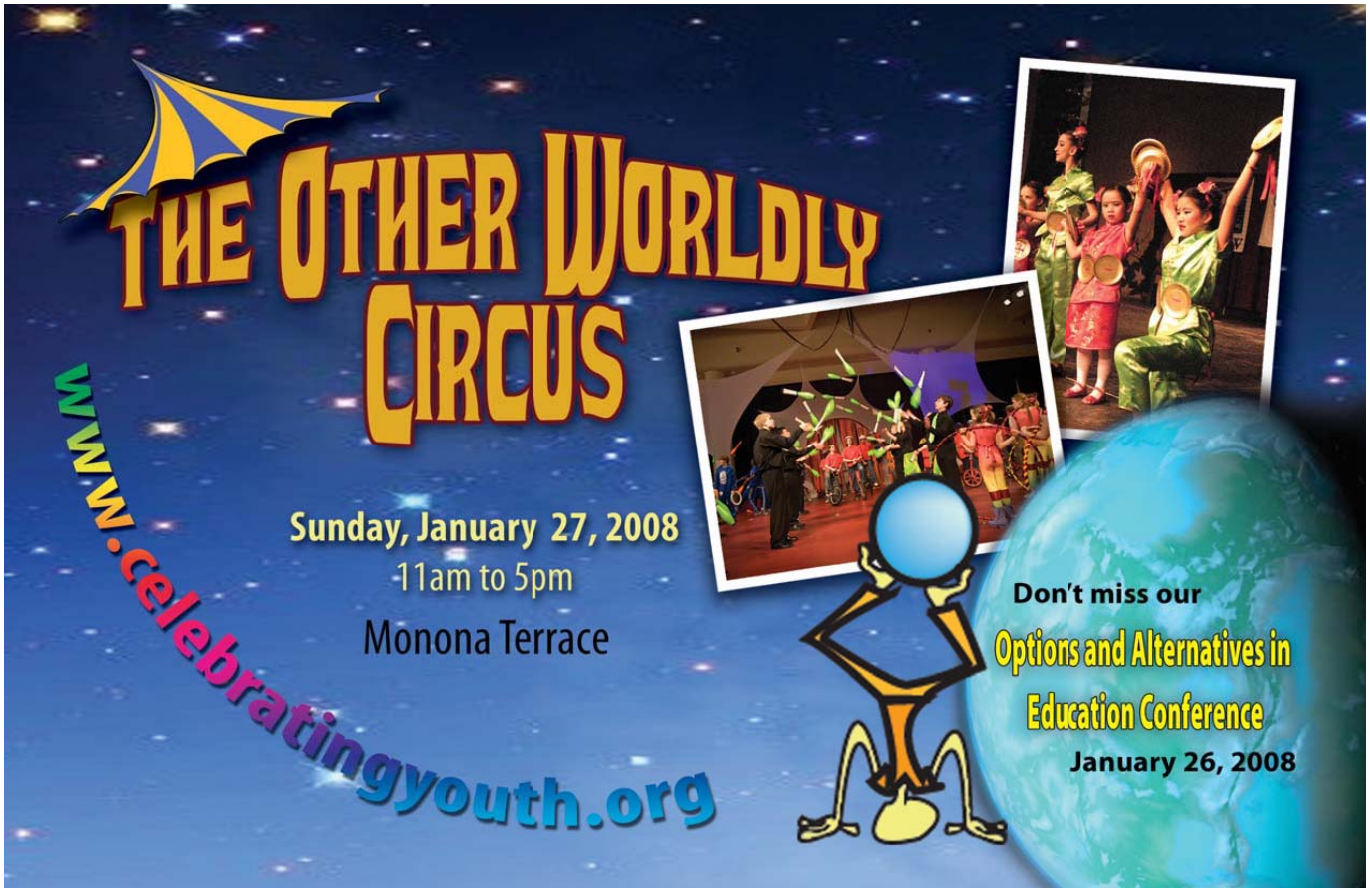
Site Supervisor Changes in Both Regions

Two supervisors have changed sites, one has returned to AFTER SCHOOL after a two year absence and one will be on maternity leave in the Dane Region.

Frank Hilliard, who was site supervisor at Elm Lawn School in Middleton for three years and at the Wisconsin Youth and Family Center (WYFC) site for three months has taken over as supervisor at West Middleton replacing Ang Illar. Albert Watson who started with AFTER SCHOOL in the fall of 2007 is moving from Muir to the WYFC site. Nathanial Hedke who was the site supervisor previously at Muir for three years is returning to take over that site. He worked for AFTER SCHOOL for three years before leaving to continue his education.

Lua Yaganagi, the site supervisor at Chavez AFTER SCHOOL will be on maternity leave. Float supervisor Vicki Lee will cover for her the six weeks she is on leave. Lua plans to return to Chavez after that time.

In the Waukesha Region long time Wales AFTER SCHOOL Site Supervisor Cherrill Flitz has retired. Site specialist Evelyn Ackermann has also retired from Wales. The two worked together for many years. Faith Lane will be stepping in as the site supervisor at Wales Elementary.



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