



Newsletter

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Inside *this issue:*

AFTER SCHOOL Improves Safety Record	2
"Sister Act" in AFTER SCHOOL Offices	2
Generation Tours Dog Sledding and Train Trips	4
Summer Videos	4
Waukesha Office Historic Building	4
Waubesa Club Wins Trivia Challenge	5
Fruit Sale Nets Over \$1,500	5
Download Forms from Website	5
Kindergartner's Winning Design	6

Run Away, Join the Circus at Celebrating Youth!

If you ever thought of running away to join the circus then January 22 will be your chance. That's the date for Wisconsin Youth Company's annual recognition of positive youth achievement, Celebrating Youth! This year the theme is "Circus of Dreams". WYC has joined with Circus World Museum to create a world of circus fun at the Monona Terrace.

"What I'm most excited about is the circus performance at the end of the day," said Spyder Carneol, WYC Events Coordinator. "It is an amazing collaboration of over 12 organizations."

Along with the usual array of booths featuring youth-oriented organizations and activities and several stages with youth performers in the areas of dance, and other performance arts, there will be a real circus.

Carneol said the atmosphere of the circus will be recreated thanks materials loaned by Circus

World Museum. "Everyone will experience the quality of an authentic circus."

"They are loaning us several 18 foot historic sideshow banners and a well-loved and well-used 38 foot diameter wooden circus ring," said Carneol.

Continued on Page 3



Spyder Carneol holds some of the kites that youth will fly during the Celebrating Youth! Circus of Dreams.

Did You Know?

- *Wisconsin Youth Company Board President Laurie Frank will speak at the Social Emotional Conference about experiential education.*
- *The most common cause of injury to children in AFTER SCHOOL programs in 2005 was "trip and fall" indoors, outdoors or on playground equipment.*

Social Emotional Conference to Focus on Play

"Growing Children: The Lasting Value of Play" is the title of Wisconsin Youth Company's annual social emotional conference scheduled for Saturday February 25, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pyle Center. The conference is primarily a professional development opportunity for AFTER SCHOOL staff but also attracts students and staff from the University of Wisconsin, members of the community at large and AFTER SCHOOL parents.

The Educational Psychology Department at UW is co-sponsoring the event. Speakers include Laura Berk, a psychology professor from Illinois State University. She will speak on the role of imaginative play in children's lives. Jeffrey Lewis, an assistant professor of Human Development and Family Studies at UW, will speak on the "Social and Developmental Implications of 'Work and

Play". Susan Oliver, Executive Director of Playing for Keeps, a national non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the importance of play, will speak on the role of play in childhood. Diedre Omahan, Program Director from the Lekotek Institute will speak on making play accessible to children with special needs. WYC Board President Laurie Frank will also speak at the conference on "Play with Purpose". She is an experiential educator and consultant.

The cost of the conference including lunch will be \$55. The cost to students will be \$15. CEU hours and Registry credit are available.

For more information or to request a conference brochure, call 800-552-8878 or email jbonesho@wisconsinyouthcompany.org, or you may visit www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org/conference.

AFTER SCHOOL Improves Safety Record

AFTER SCHOOL's safety record for the first semester improved from 2004 to 2005 as shown by the filing of 43 fewer "incident reports".

Incident reports are filed by program staff when children are injured on site.

With 40 sites and more than 1,500 children it's not surprising that some will get injured at times. Risk Manager Bonnie Carlson regularly tours sites checking for hazards, conducts workshops for all staff on safety, gives regular safety reminders in site supervisor's weekly memos and reviews all incident reports.

The most common cause of injury is "trip and fall" indoors, outdoors or on playground equipment. There were 116 of those type of incidents in 2005, exactly the same number as in 2004. The second most common injury was being accidentally "poked or bumped by another child".

Numbers of injuries showing improvement were "running into an inanimate object" which dropped from 45 in 2004 to 33 in 2005; fewer equipment injuries, fewer injuries from being hit by a ball, fewer bloody noses and no heat exhaustion. The number of children sustaining burn injuries increased slightly, possibly from the introduction of wood-burning crafts at some sites.

AFTER SCHOOL's Offices Have "Sister Act"

Each morning they drive opposite directions for work from their home but they work for the same company. Sisters Justine Bergmann and Jinny Phillips both work for Wisconsin Youth Company. Justine works in the Madison office and Jinny works in the Waukesha office. The sisters live together halfway between the two offices in Watertown.

Jinny started with WYC in November of 2000 as the office receptionist. She is now the office manager and accounts receivables person. Justine is an accounting clerk in the Madison office but also handles some front office duties. She joined WYC in August of 2005 after serving as a volunteer in both offices.

"The biggest challenge to my job is learning all the different things I need to know because I have my hands in so many things - billing, accounting, programs, etc.," said Justine.

So do they talk about work when they're at home?

"Every minute of every day," jokes Justine.

Jinny has a daughter Erica, 10 and Justine has a daughter, Audrea, 9. The girls are good

friends. Jinny's husband of 11 years, Eric, also is part of the household.

"You know, if you called me in August I wouldn't even be able to talk to you," confided Jinny.

August is crunch time for both offices when parents are rushing to register their children for before and after school programs.

In spite of the periods of heavy work loads both women enjoy their jobs with WYC and for the same reason: the people they work with.

"We have a good group of people," said Jinny. "We get along well and we all help each other out."

Justine also likes the flexibility her job offers.

"It's important to me because I have a child and I'm a single mom," she said.

Both women have a lot of phone contact with parents regarding billing and signing children up for programs. Any words of advice to parents?

"Don't wait until the last minute to register your kids!" they said.

“Don't wait until the last minute to register your kids!”



Jinny Phillips



Justine Bergmann

A Real Circus Inside Monona Terrace

Continued from page 1

Circus World will bring several of the historic, hand carved and decorated circus wagons to the event as well.

“We have raised about \$2,000 to bring them and we still need more money,” said Carneol.

Sandy Miller, co-coordinator of the event, visited Circus World to look at the wagons and the other materials the museum is willing to loan.

“I kept looking at the wagons and thinking of how many hands have touched them over the years,” said Miller, her eyes shining. The museum is also loaning life size “cut outs” of circus characters and “pull-ups”, four foot square boxes that contain 20 foot high decorated columns that pull up out of the boxes.

“They’re sort of like totem poles covered with glitter and sequins,” said Carneol. “They’re just beautiful!”

Carneol has learned a lot about the circus as she has been planning this event for the past year and feels that Celebrating Youth! will be an opportunity to teach people about the circus.

“It’s all about art - performance art, graphic arts, music,” said Carneol. “I really want people to see the exotic nature of the circus.”

There will be an indoor circus parade starting at 3 p.m. Children and youth can participate in the parade by borrowing a costume from the costume booth or coming with their own.

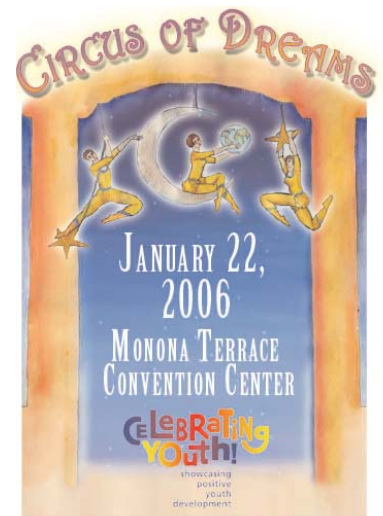
At 3:30 the actual circus performance will start inside a fabric structure that will suggest a big top.

“We’ll have theatrical lighting and a house band,” said Carneol.

Each act during the circus portion of the day represents a quality that is “essential to the lives of youth,” Carneol explained. For example, the Kojo Drill Team chose “the unconquered” as their quality. The Mazo Aerial Dancers chose the term “transformation” as their key word and the kite flyers chose “soaring” to represent their quality.

Throughout the day there will be performances on three stages featuring groups like the Ho Chunk Dancers, Yonim Israeli Dancers, UW Break Dancing Team, Madtown Twisters, Hua Mulan Chinese Dance Troupe, Trinity Dancers, and many more.

There will also be circus arts workshops where visitors can participate. These include juggling, stilt walking, clowning and acrobatics. The entire event is free. It is coordinated by Wisconsin Youth Company staff and paid for with grants and in kind support from AnchorBank-fsb Hilldale, Charter Communications, Circus World Museum, CUNA Foundation, Dean St. Mary’s, Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission, Endres Foundation, Madison Arts Commission and the Wisconsin Arts Board. Media sponsors are Dane County Kids, La Movida, Magic 98, Q106, WKOW 27 and WORT.



“It’s all about art - performance art, graphic art, music.”

Clowns Without Borders to Perform for WYC

Clowns Without Borders, the international clowning group that brings entertainment to children in conflict and crisis zones, will perform at the Wisconsin Youth Company's social emotional conference “Growing Children: The Lasting Value of Play” on February 25. The group is scheduled to perform over lunch, 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Pyle Center, 610 Langdon St., on the UW campus in Madison.

The group brings contemporary clown/circus performances and workshops to communities all over the world. According to its mission statement, the group seeks to “improve the

psychological conditions in crisis situations bringing humor and laughter through volunteer artist performances as well as workshops with children and with educators”. Their motto is “No child without a smile”.

The group has chapters in Spain, France, Sweden, Quebec, Belgium and the U.S. Currently the U.S. chapter is active in Guatemala and South Africa and will soon visit Haiti and the Sudan.

Anyone interested in a Clowns Without Borders presentation should contact Nina Cheney Mills at 608-832-4854.



On the road in South Africa

Generation Tours Plans Dog Sledding, Train Trip



*Dog Days of Winter Sledding
Sunday, February 5, 2006*



*Snow Train and Pizza Party
Sunday, February 19, 2006*

It may be cold and wintry but you can still have fun in the snow especially if you sign up for a "Dog Days of Winter" dog sledding trip or a ride on the Snow Train. Both trips are available through Generation Tours, a division of Wisconsin Youth Company.

The dog sledding trip is planned for Sunday, February 5. Participants will spend a day in Fond du Lac learning all about dog sledding. Families will get to help with the harnessing of the dogs and even driving or "mushing" the sleds! This trip is for families with children ages seven and older and costs \$30 per person. The fee includes lunch, dog sled riding, mushing instruction, transportation, educational materials and youth coordinator and driver services. The van leaves from the Waukesha Outpost at 11 a.m. and returns at 6:30 p.m. It leaves from Madison at 9:30 a.m. and returns at 5 p.m.

If mushing in the outdoors isn't for you, try a pizza party and a ride on the Mid Continent Snow Train. This trip is planned for Sunday, February 19. Families will enjoy a pizza party in downtown Wisconsin Dells then board the train for a ride through the snow-covered Baraboo Hills. All cars are heated by steam heat or coal-fired stoves. Cost for this trip is \$30 and it is open to families with children of all ages. The van leaves the Madison Outpost at 10 a.m. and returns at 4 p.m. It leaves Waukesha at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 5:30 p.m. The fee includes lunch, transportation, train tickets, educational materials and youth coordinator and driver services. For more information call 1-866-436-8877.



Summer Videos to Premiere

Videos produced by young people attending 2005 AFTER SCHOOL summer day camps and Middle School U will premiere at a special event at the Orpheum Theatre, 216 State St., Madison on January 18 at 7 p.m. The videos were produced by 31 children involved in three week-long summer day

camp sessions called "Lights, Camera, Action!" Twenty-one youth participating in two week-long video production sessions through the Middle School U program also made videos. The one hour event is free and open to the public.

Waukesha Office Located in Historic Building



*The Waukesha County
Administrative Office building,
located at N9 W24198 Bluemound
Road.*

It may be hard to find but once you get there you'll find a beautiful historic building. AFTER SCHOOL's Waukesha County offices are located in a farmhouse believed to have been built in 1843. The two story beige stone house, known as the Hodgson House, is surrounded by large pine trees. It is located on Blue Mound Road about a quarter-mile from County Trunk J in Waukesha County.

Only a small sign indicates where to turn to reach the AFTER SCHOOL offices and rear parking lot. Because the building looks like a private residence it's easy for parents coming there on AFTER SCHOOL business to miss it.

The building is owned by private investor Lee Palmer. He purchased the building along with two partners in 1994. According to Palmer's secretary, Jean Klawitter, the building was previously occupied by a publishing company and a marketing company. Palmer uses two front offices and AFTER SCHOOL rents the rest of the building.

"Mr. Palmer likes renting to AFTER SCHOOL because the staff respects the building," said Klawitter.

Besides office and storage space, AFTER SCHOOL maintains a classroom at Hodgson House which is used for staff training and for non-school day programs for children.

Waubesa AFTER SCHOOL Club Program Wins Trivia Challenge

The Waubesa AFTER SCHOOL Club program won the Dane County region AFTER SCHOOL Trivia Challenge last month following a close finish. Waubesa scored 161 points in the eight round competition. Coming in second was the Fox Prairie AFTER SCHOOL Club program with 156. AFTER SCHOOL Clubs at Hawthorne and West Middleton tied for third with 140 points.

The competition began in October, the brain child of AFTER SCHOOL Program Director Andrew Stuht.

“We’ve had a lot of sports competition over the years and that has been hard to arrange,” said Stuht. “We had to find drivers and make sure the vans were available to transport kids to other schools to compete.”

The other issue, Stuht noted, was that sports competitions tended to target kids who were athletic. He was looking for something that was more inclusive and that could “draw on the strengths of all kids”.

“When I mentioned playing Trivia, the site supervisors faces’ really lit up,” said Stuht.

The next chore was finding good Trivia questions that were challenging but not too hard for young people to answer. Stuht used the Internet to locate Trivia web sites to mine for good questions. He also came up with the idea that there would be four categories each round and each category would have five questions. Four of the questions were to be answered by the children for one point each and for the fifth question, worth two points, they could get help from AFTER SCHOOL staff.

The most points that could be scored in a round by any one site were 24. Fox Prairie AFTER SCHOOL Club scored 23 points one time. Stuht also developed an extra hard bonus category which allowed students to ask any adults for help. Each of those questions was worth three points.

The Trivia Challenge was so popular that Stuht hopes to repeat it second semester. Thirteen Dane County sites participated. Waubesa’s reward for winning is their choice of either an ice cream or pizza party.

“When I mentioned playing Trivia, the site supervisors’ faces really lit up.”

Fruit Sale Nets Over \$1,500 for Scholarship Fund

Two hundred and forty three cases of fruit were sold prior to the holidays netting \$1,535 for the AFTER SCHOOL Scholarship Fund.

The Scholarship Fund helps low income families pay to send their children to AFTER SCHOOL. Each year Wisconsin Youth Company, parent company of AFTER SCHOOL, conducts two fund raisers, a fruit sale in November and December and raffles at the spring fairs in Waukesha and Madison. Last year was the first year for the fruit sale. Riversweet brand fruit from Florida was sold.

Cases of grapefruit, oranges, tangelos, and mixes of the three were available. Although fewer cases were sold this year, a price increase helped maintain the amount collected for the Scholarship Fund.

If you would like to apply for a scholarship contact the Madison office, 608-267-9782 or the Waukesha office, 262-547-8770 to find out if you qualify.

Scholarships are given out on a first come, first served basis.



9 SCHOLARSHIPS

have been given out so far for the first semester of the 2005-06 school year.

Download Forms, Get Information from Website

Everything from health forms to the winter break field trip schedule can be found on AFTER SCHOOL’s new website. It took more than a year to gather all the many pieces of information about all of AFTER SCHOOL’s program sites and staff, registration procedures and forms and other important information. Then it had to be condensed for quick access by busy readers, but finally the site is “live”.

New AFTER SCHOOL families have been able to download registration forms which save families and AFTER SCHOOL office staff time. Information about non-school days including planned field trips is posted so parents can check where their children will be going on a given day. There is also a staff section with teaching resources and a “Just for Kids” zone with fun websites to visit. You can find it at www.afterschoolwi.org.



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Waukesha Kindergartner's Design Picked



For the first time a Kindergartner's design has been chosen for the AFTER SCHOOL holiday cards. Abbey, 5, had her picture of a Christmas tree drawn with markers printed on the holiday cards. Children attending AFTER SCHOOL programs submit designs and they are judged by a team from the administrative offices. The cards have been sold in the past as a fundraiser for the AFTER SCHOOL Scholarship Fund. Abbey will receive five boxes of cards as a prize for having drawn the winning design. Abbey attends the before school program at Wales Elementary School in Waukesha County. Her parents, Kristine and Andrew, are very proud of her achievement.



Abbey