



Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem Youth of the Year Nominees at the Spring Gala. L to R: Ryan, Emiluis, Lindsay and Bonnibel. (Photo Courtesy: Chip Bott)

YOUTH OF THE YEAR

by Lindsay and Bonnibel

Here at the Club we have a program called Youth of the Year. Youth of the Year is when staff members nominate Club members who demonstrate leadership and charisma in the way they present themselves. Youth of the Year is a very helpful way for the nominees to get a chance to become a role model for the younger Club members, who look up to these nominees and they want to be like them.

Youth of the Year has a variety of qualifications. The main thing is representing the Club in a good way. This whole program revolves around the Club and what the Club has done for each candidate. Another qualification is public speaking. When a Club member is nominated for Youth of the Year, they need to feel comfortable speaking in front of an audience. It's important that they practice the speech or essay that will be read aloud in front of the community.

The next qualification is poise. The nominee needs to have the ability to speak to strangers in a warm and kind way. When we were selling raffle tickets at the Spring Gala event, we had to tell everyone about the Youth of the Year Program and ask them to buy tickets. This shows that in any situation, the nominee can stay calm in spite of everything going on. Poise is a quality that can really set the standards for any other competitors. Last but not least is the ability to work with all types of people. No matter what race they are or where they come from, people skills allows them to communicate in an appropriate manner.

There are several steps to this process. The first step is being interviewed by the staff about home and family, moral character, community, school, service to the Club and life goals. After the nominee gets interviewed, they write essays on what the Club means to him/her and why a post high school education is important. After all the essays are written and typed, they go in front of a panel of judges from the community. The nominees are then interviewed by the judges. We each had to wait patiently in the teen center while the judges talked to each nominee. Some of us were excited while others were sweating bullets waiting to go into the panel. Those judges then choose a winner which was announced at the Spring Gala. The Gala was at the Hawthorne Hotel, where all the nominees were honored. The winner was Ryan, who read his essay about the Boys & Girls Club in front of the audience. Ryan will compete in a state competition against other Youth of the Year, and the winner of that goes on to a national competition and gets to meet the President of the United States.



Youth of the year winner Ryan (L) reacts to the announcement at the Gala. (Photo Courtesy: Chip Bott)

Being nominated as Youth of the Year is a great learning experience. Both of these writers were nominees this year. Unfortunately we didn't win but it was fun participating. We appreciate the staff for believing in us. *See pages 6 & 7 to read all four Youth of the Year essays.*

CELEBRATION TIME

by Shariany

On Tuesday, March 25 we celebrated our first edition of "What's the Word?". Guests included staff, board members and Tom Dalton, a reporter for Salem News. Coffee Time in Salem donated a cake and we distributed the first edition of the newspaper to members of our club. We asked a few questions of our guests and here is what they said:

Naomi: "What do you think of the newspaper?"

Trip Mason: "The newspaper is very important to the club- it allows us to communicate with the community."

Jonangel: "What do you think about the newspaper?"

Chris Zorzy: "It's a great success, you guys did a great job and you should be happy."

Jonangel: "What was your favorite part?"

Chris Zorzy: "The interview with me:)"

Justin: "What did you like most about the newspaper?"

Tom Dalton: "The question and answer on AnnMarie about her most embarrassing moment."

Justin: "Do you have any tips for us?"

Tom Dalton: "More profiles on club members."



Above: Members of the Whats the Word Newspaper Staff celebrate their success.

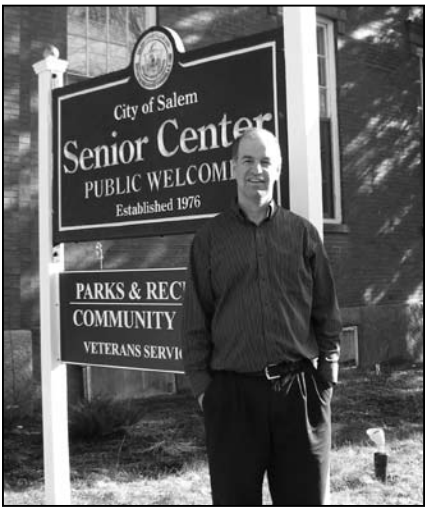
Right: Tom Dalton of the Salem News shares his thoughts with Jodi Sperling and Ryan.

(Photos Courtesy: Matt Viglianti)



CHECK INSIDE FOR MORE COOL STUFF:

Former Club Kid Doug Bollen Gives Back... Dance the Afternoon Away at the Club... Program Director Jodi Sperling Keeps Us Busy... The Olympics Come to Salem Early... Salem Police Department is G.R.E.A.T. and "What Are You Looking Forward to this Summer?" all inside.



Board Member Doug Bollen is Anything but “Bored”

by Ryan & Justin

Douglas J. Bollen is the Director of Park, Recreation and Community Services and a board member for the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem. When asked how it feels to work for the City of Salem, Doug said “It feels good to provide services for residents of all ages. There is a really good feeling that comes out of doing this job”. We asked Doug his favorite parts of Salem, and he said “It’s on the ocean, has lots of history, diverse neighborhoods and beautiful parks.”

Doug grew up in Lynn, and was an active member of the Lynn Boys & Girls Club. His favorite memory as a Club member was summer camp at Creighton Pond in Middleton where he learned how to swim. He also played for the 12 and under basketball team.



Top: Board Member Doug Bollen at the Senior Center/Community Services Office.

Left: Bollen is an avid runner.

When he graduated high school, Doug didn’t know what he wanted to be in the future, so he went to a career counselor to help him decide. They suggested Recreation Management, which he studied at Northeastern University. After college, he joined the staff of the Lynn Boys & Girls Club. His favorite part of being Program Director was coaching the basketball teams, including the 13 & under team who he coached to three New England Championships. His most embarrassing moment as a staff member was when he got pushed into the pool.

Doug traveled all around the country being a dog judge and racing his Afghan hound name Cooper, who was the fastest Afghan hound for one year in the U.S. His favorite quote is by Vince Lombardi, “Everyone has the will to win; few have the will to prepare to win.” This means many think they can win but not a lot practice to win.

Doug has been an active board member of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem for 4 years, and is Race Director of the Wild Turkey 5 Mile Thanksgiving Day Race which helps programs at the Club. When we asked him what he’d like to change at the Club, Doug said “We need to build a new Boys & Girls Club one day, with a brand new gym.”

NOW HERE THIS!

An Interview with Mrs. Nadeau by Chanel

As a Club member, hearing Mrs. Nadeau’s voice over the intercom full of energy reminds us of programs we might like to join in on at the Boys & Girls Club.

Mrs. Nadeau is a staff member at The Club, and sees herself as a greeter. She is very important, being the first person you see when you come into the Club. She works at the front desk and likes working here because she enjoys being around kids. Mrs. Nadeau has worked here for 3 years, and also works as a teaching assistant at the Bentley School. She sees many of the same faces at the Club and at school, which helps her to get to know them better. Her favorite announcement is “The café is now opening for your dining convenience”. She has been married for 30 years, has three sons, and two beautiful nieces. Club member Gabrieli

thinks Mrs. Nadeau is kind, she cares about us and is also very funny. She says Mrs. Nadeau is very dynamic and full of life.



Donna Nadeau at her post at the check-in desk inside the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem.

What’s the Word Welcomes Four New Reporters:



Justin, age 11

Grade 6, Collins Middle School
Fun Facts: I like hip-hop and Sponge Bob Squarepants. When I grow up, I want to own a restaurant in Paris.



Chanel, age 13

Grade 7, Nathaniel Bowditch School
Fun Facts: I love to dance and watch TV. I like talking with my friends and family. My favorite color is blue.



Adonis “Mingo”, age 12

Grade 7, Nathaniel Bowditch School
Fun Facts: I love basketball, I like dogs, and I like the people at the Club.



Shariany, age 15

Grade 9, Salem High School
Fun Facts: I’m loud, I talk a lot and I love school & math.

LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL!

Join us for a bunch of laughs to benefit a great group of kids during Salem Heritage Days.

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem annual **COMEDY NIGHT** is Wednesday, August 6 at 7 p.m. at the Salem Moose Lodge. The featured Comedian is Paul D’Angelo and ticket donations are just \$10. Raffles; refreshments available for purchase. For ticket info, see bgcgs.org or call (978)744-0915.

We hope you can join us!

What’s the Word is a quarterly publication of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem, MA published 3x during the school year. **Stories & photos by What’s the Word newspaper staff:** Bonnibel, Jonangel, Brusela, Ryan, Alex, Lindsay, Naomi, Chanel, Justin, Adonis, Shariany. **Additional photo credits:** Chip Bott, Jodi Sperling, Matt Viglianti **Development Director:** Ray Billings **Program Director:** Jodi Sperling, **Design:** Tara Pastina & Beth O’Grady **Program Advisor:** Beth O’Grady **Printing:** Charles River Publishing **Program Sponsor:** Comcast
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CLUB MEMBERS AND THE COMMUNITY

Here are just a few ways Club members have been involved with the community over the past few months:

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? Thank you to Paul Herrick for donating a Public Address system to the club to be used for Club events.

A big **THANK YOU** to students from St. John’s Prep who helped the club with a clean up on Thursday, March 20.

Congrats to all the Club kids who participated in the Walk for HAWC on Sunday April 27.

Didn’t we almost make it! The 12 & under traveling basketball team made it all the way to the final championship game on Saturday, April 12 at Boston University. Congrats on a great season!

Thank you to Blue Man Group at the Charles Playhouse in Boston for inviting 20 club members as their guests to the Tuesday, April 29 show.

Salem Police Volunteers are G.R.E.A.T. by Adonis

On March 1, the Boys & Girls Club had a three on three basketball tournament at Salem High School. The Boys & Girls Club and Salem Police program, G.R.E.A.T., gave out T-shirts to all the players that came to the tournament. G.R.E.A.T. stands for Gang Resistance Education and Training, and is a school based program of law enforcement, officer-instructed classroom curriculum.



Over 75 local youth, ages 9-18, participated in the tournament.



The 12 and under award recipients.

The goal of G.R.E.A.T. is to prevent crime, violence and gang involvement, while developing a positive relationship among law enforcement, families, and young people to create safer communities.

The Salem Police Department also helped out by refereeing games. The tournament had

teams of all ages, from 9 year olds up to 18 year olds. There were over 25 teams participating, each a member of the Club. They gave out team medals for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, and MVP medals, too. The losers would go onto the loser bracket and the winners would go to the winner bracket. Everyone got pizza, water bottles, oranges and blow up basketballs.

I was one of the twelve and under players with two of my friends. We won our first game and lost our second game, which brought us to the loser's bracket where we won again but lost the final game. The Mayor of Salem, Kim Driscoll, was the referee of some of my games. I had a lot of fun at the all day event, and hope we can do basketball tournaments more often. It is a great experience for all the kids to work with the Police Department on a more relaxed basis here at the Club.



Danny, Brian and Antonio, members of the Boys & Girls Club travelling league and Salem High School Varsity team, won the tournament.



Saira reads her testimonial in front of a full house at the 2008 Spring Gala to benefit the Boys & Girls Club.

What The Boys & Girls Club Means to Me by Saira

I love going to the club because it keeps me safe from all the danger that could be outside. The Boys & Girls Club helped me in getting my grades up in school. I saw the difference in my two report cards and there was a big difference. I am in five programs Smart Girls, Torch Club, Dance, Soccer, and Basketball. Did I mention we have an arcade and a café?

Jenny and Mary-Ellen run a program called Smart Girls. Smart Girls...well, you know, girls they are pretty smart! It's about girls through the ages 8-12 that write in our journals at the beginning of the session. We have lots of fun in Smart Girls talking about issues girls are facing. Once last year at Smart Girls we played a game when we have two chairs across from each other and we have a blanket in the middle and someone sits in the chairs when the blanket falls we yell the other person's name. I fell out of my chair but got up and kept on going.

Another program I am in is Torch Club. We have lots of stuff we're planning to do for our club! We also had a bake sale last week and the money went to the walk for HAWC. Torch Club is a program that teaches leadership skills for boys and girls.

When I go up to the dance studio I love practicing all the new dances with Mary- Ellen. We dance to songs from the artists Rob Martine and Justin Timberlake- truly amazing artists.

The Boys & Girls Club also does summer camp which is totally awesome. We go to beaches, pools and many other field trips or we just go to the Salem Common to play baseball or football which I enjoy.

I especially love hanging out with all the staff here. I can talk to Jodi and Berta about everything going on! We won the first playoff game in basketball, where I'm the only girl on the whole team. Today was the second day of the traveling soccer league with Matt. Last year when I played soccer we had so much fun we won all the games except the Woburn Club, but we tried our best.

I appreciate coming to the club because my friends and favorite staff are here for me everyday.

Hip-Hop, Hooray! *New Dance Program at the Club*

by Chanel & Naomi



Mary-Ellen Hickey, the newest addition to the full time staff, has found her niche within the Club.

The Dance Program is a group of 18 girls, ages 8-13, that dance to hip-hop, and are soon going to dance to jazz. The group meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-5 p.m., and they have already learned four choreographed dances. The girls have fun and learn a lot from each other, both in and out of practice. Mary Ellen Hickey is the choreographer, and the new Art & Education Director at the Club.

Mary Ellen started dancing when she was little, and became interested from watching theater and musicals. She loves to teach others. Her favorite dance that she taught her class was "Ain't Nothing Wrong With That" by Robert Randolph.

Nikkol is a club member who participates in the Dance Program. This is her first time in a dance class. Her favorite part is practicing the dances, and her favorite dance is "Don't Matter & Don't Baby". She doesn't get nervous in front of audiences. They have learned five dances. She helps others if they need help. Nikkol likes Mary Ellen as a mentor. Julianna is another first time dance student who doesn't get nervous in front of an audience. "I've learned hip-hop, jazz and ballet - because ballet moves are a part of every dance".

The dance group will perform at the Champions Dinner at the end of the year, which is an event to recognize members who participated in a program at The Boys & Girls Club.



Cecilia is one of the youngest dancers in the program and never misses a session.



Julianna, age 10, participates in the travel soccer league, dance, Smart Girls and Power Hour homework club.



First year participants in the new Dance Program at the Boys & Girls Club.



WEAR YOUR PJs TO THE CLUB DAY

Left: Adjoa and Alexis proudly display their PJs which they wore all day during vacation week.

Right: Jay and Corey wore their favorite Gil Silva pajamas and were able to win lots of tournaments for raffle tickets.



Nikkol and Briahna dress up for pajama day and play some bumper pool to win raffle tickets for prizes.

Program Director Jodi Sperling Keeps Club Members Busy

by Lindsay & Shariany



Reporters Lindsay (L) and Shariany (R) get a word with Boys & Girls Club Program Director Jodi Sperling (Center).

It was a beautiful sunny day when we sat down at a Jaho café in Salem and had cappuccino and smoothies while we interviewed Jodi Anne Sperling. Jodi is the program director of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem has been working here for over two years. Jodi has many plans to make the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem a better place for kids to come, learn, develop, and of course have fun. Jodi has many goals for the Boys & Girls Club: “to run stronger programs in all areas, especially targeting girls” and to get a new building with a bigger gym and a pool. Before coming to Salem, Jodi was the Art Director at the Pawtucket Boys & Girls Club in Rhode Island which makes her want to run many more arts programs here including ceramics, papermaking, and more photography. One thing she loves about this Boys & Girls Club is seeing the kids everyday and seeing how they mature and grow.

When Jodi was younger she wished that there was something like the Boys & Girls Club that she could have attended after

school. Instead she kept herself busy on a swim team from ages 8-18. She grew in a small town in upstate New York surrounded by cow farms, apple orchards and corn fields. She attended High School in Plattsburgh, NY which was called Peru High School.

Jodi is married to her husband, Michael, who was a photographer for the Salem News and now runs all the websites. Jodi, being a busy bee, only cooks on weekends, while Michael cooks dinner all week. Wow, what a great guy! Jodi met her Michael in college at the Rochester Institute of Technology, where she majored in Photography and Sociology.

Fun Facts About Jodi:

- *Loves the colors blue & brown together.
- *Favorite food is sushi.
- *Got engaged at the Boys & Girls Club.
- *Loves hiking and kayaking.
- *Prefers Domino’s because they sponsor the B&G Club.
- *If she eats pizza its got to have all the veggies, no meat.
- *Paper or Plastic? “I like cloth bags because then you can use them over again...”
- *Do you sing in the shower, “Of course, who doesn’t?”

Olympics Come Early to Salem Club

by Alex and Jonangel

Olympic Week Tournaments:

- Othello, Soccer, Hockey,
- Checkers, Crosswords, Trivia,
- Pool, Bumper pool, Basketball,
- Football, Ping Pong, Chutes and
- Ladders, Chess, Bucket Wars,
- Dodge ball, Spelling Bee

Over February school vacation, Club members participated in Olympic Week and Marathon Day.

Olympic Week is when Club members have a competition to decide which team has the best sportsmanship. Members are split up into different team named after different countries. This year’s teams were: Spain, Canada, Japan, England and Mexico. Each team made a

flag and a poster with information about the country. Each day your country could earn points for participating in an activity or for coming in first, second or third in the daily competitions. But the most important way you could earn points is for sportsmanship. At the end of Olympic Week, Spain came in 1st, Canada came in 2nd and Japan came in 3rd and each team won medals.

The last night of Olympic Week is Marathon Day. It is the only fundraiser of the year that the club members participate in. To sleep overnight at the Boys & Girls Club, each kid is asked to raise \$45 in donations for their Club. To raise the \$45 dollars, kids would ask someone to sponsor them to help support Club programs. The person who raises the most money won a Nintendo DS Light, with the winner being Jordan. Over \$3,000 was raised for this fundraiser, which is a new record. This year 42 kids slept over which is twice as many as last year. We played basketball, manhunt, scrabble, X-Box360, and watched a movie. We also went swimming at the YMCA and had a pudding eating contest. Five staff members slept over with the kids. The staff beat the kids at midnight at a staff vs. kids dodgeball game. We had Upper Crust Pizza for lunch, Brother’s Deli macaroni and cheese for dinner and Bagel World bagels for breakfast.



A tradition which is now tied, staff Jodi Sperling and Tyler play an intense game of Scrabble against staff Matt Carr and Matt.



4 a.m., Michael decides its finally time to get some shut eye.



Who needs beauty sleep?



Pudding eating contest- who will find the gummy worm first?



7 a.m.- Finally down for the “night”, Johnel falls asleep on Kyle’s feet.

YOUTH OF THE YEAR ESSAY

by Ryan, 2008 Youth of the Year Winner



For the past three years the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem has been an integral part of my life. I have been coming here everyday and have been involved in every program the Club offers. The Club is very important to me because it makes me feel responsible, accomplished and well liked.

I can't stand having nothing to do so I like helping out wherever I am. I have always been most content when I am busy. At the Club, I help out all the time. I run the cafe' everyday, I help Andre, the teen director and Matt, the Athletic Director, with their tournaments, I help Jodi, the Program Director, do whatever she needs. I am a "Jr. Staff" and get paid for about 20 hours of work each week but I find myself enjoying it more than what most people think of as a "job". While working in the game room I run several tournaments (i.e. ping pong, pool, foosball...), in the homework room I help with Power Hour, in the gym I run dodgeball, football, basketball and other games. I am very much appreciated for the work I do around the Club and feel a great deal of satisfaction and value for my efforts. "No good deed goes unnoticed" is how the Club treats everyone. Whenever I do something positive at the club a staff member always recognizes what I have done and commends me in some way.

I have accomplished a lot since coming to the Club three years ago. When I first started coming to the Club I only came to play basketball. Then I saw all the programs and opportunities the Club offered and started to join in. My grades have improved, because of the Power Hour Program offered each day. It is the after-school homework program at the Club and it has helped me make time to complete my homework. I am much better at doing all my homework now and my grades have improved because of it. I am on the staff of the Club newspaper and contribute as a reporter. I love to play basketball and I play on the 15 and under travel basketball team here at the Club. My first year, I sat the bench most of the time but my coaches kept pushing me and teaching me. Now, I play a lot more minutes and I feel like I am a real contributor. I love going to other clubs to see their facility and to meet other basketball players. Since coming to the Club I have become interested in child psychology because someday I want to open my own daycare center. The Club does a great job with kids and I hope to do the same when I have my own center. I work with kids here at the Club and although it was difficult at first I have gained a lot of confidence and the respect of all the younger members. I knew I wanted to go to college when I first joined the Club but now I know what I want to study when I get there.

One of the biggest reasons the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem is so important to me is because I really like and trust the staff. They are fair, honest and fun to be around. They have all mentored me in different ways. I feel like they give me a lot of responsibility because they trust and like me. They consider me to be quite mature and capable of handling tough decisions, guiding my peers and our youth members. Because of this I was named President of our Keystone Club which I enjoy being a motivator and keeping kids enthusiastic for. I am also a writer for the Newsletter Club which is truly helping with my writing and interviewing skills. Without the Club I would not be the person I am proud of being today.

YOUTH OF THE YEAR ESSAY

by Lindsay, 2008 Youth of the Year Finalist



When people ask me what I am doing after school, I always reply "Going to the Boys & Girls Club". At the Boys & Girls Club I am in various programs. For example I am in the cooking program, Keystone, and the Newspaper Program. The Boys & Girls Club is a great place where I can get my homework done, too. If I'm having a bad day then I can come to, Andre, the Teen Director. If I'm having a problem with anything I can come to him to talk to. I can also go to the Program Director Jodi. She's always there for me. Since I've been coming here for about six years now I have become very comfortable within the organization. The counselor I've known the longest is Matt. Matt and I are so close. Matt is the Athletic Director. He always makes me laugh and helps me to feel better.

I'm not only a member but also a volunteer at the Club. I come to get homework, projects, and anything else I need help in done. While I'm here I play basketball, play games and hang out with my friends. For volunteer work I help the Junior Staff, Ryan and Joey out in the cafe'. I also make food for the basketball teams when they have practice.

In Keystone, I am the Secretary. That means I have to write everything down that we talk about in every meeting. Me being in Keystone shows that I can be a good role model to younger kids. When I make good decisions, the younger Club members look to me as someone they respect. When The Boys & Girls Club had a Halloween Party, Keystone ran the Halloween party games for all of the younger kids. The games were held in the gym, that's where kids dressed up in their nice costumes and played games for tickets. Those tickets turned into prizes.

Being in the Newspaper Club helps me with my writing skills and also my interviewing skills. In the cooking club we make different food for the basketball teams while they are having their practices. Cooking Club is just for the teens which gives us time to talk about things we may not otherwise feel comfortable with. It's time for teens to be alone, without the little kids.

YOUTH OF THE YEAR ESSAY

by Emiluis, 2008 Youth of the Year Finalist



The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem is a great place for teens. It has a lot options and fun experiences for teens and kids of all ages. The Boys & Girls Club means to me many different things like a ‘chill spot’, a place to stay out of trouble and do something positive. Also it keeps me busy with basketball, able to talk with staff about what’s going on my life. I get to see my friends, and the summer program was a new experience for me.

If I didn’t have the Boys & Girls Club as a ‘chill spot’ I wouldn’t know what I would be doing with my life. It’s a fun place to go that will help you stay out of trouble. There’s a lot to do at the Club, like play basketball, football, pool, do fun activities like Career Launch and its a good social experience. Also, if you are having any problems, you can talk to the staff about your personal life. For example I come to the Club early sometime just to talk to Andre Daley, the Teen Director, and I talk to him about anything.

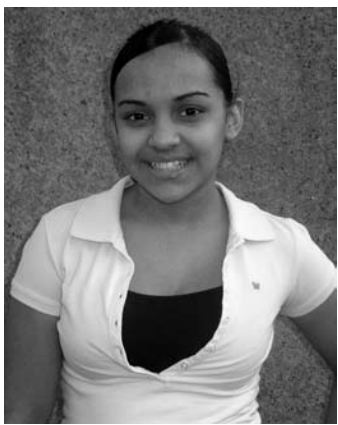
The Club is a very social place. I get to hang out with my friends in the Teen Center and play ping pong, pool or do my homework with them. I’m also on the 18 & under basketball team and I have old and new friends on the team. It’s a good experience for all of us because we’re able to work together and just able to have a good time. The team gets to go to other clubs in different cities around Massachusetts and New Hampshire and we see how they are different yet similar to ours.

There are also many different activities during the summer. Andre set up a basketball camp and also coached us on a basketball team in Boston. During the week he had a group of us doing drills, to work us out. We were doing dribbling drills, shooting drills, defensive drills, and especially running drills. After all the hard work we were better basketball players. The summer league got us all closer to Andre, with each other, and to the Boys & Girls Club.

Teens should come more to Boys & Girls Club because it really helps you and changes your life. The Club helps you by doing the simplest thing, opening their doors and letting kids in and having a place to go instead of the streets. The Boys & Girls Club is the best youth center. It is so easy to get to, I am closer to the staff, the members, and to a better life.

YOUTH OF THE YEAR ESSAY

by Bonnibel, 2008 Youth of the Year Finalist



The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem has done so much for me. That is why the Club means a lot to me. For example, it has kept me out of trouble. I have met new friends from this club and from others, and have gotten better grades. All these things have an impact in my life. The Club has helped me make my life better and get on a better track. I did have bad grades until I had help here in the club from the staff members. The staff is very helpful in a variety of ways.

Another way the Club means a great deal to me is all the programs I am involved in. I am in currently in four different programs. Those programs are Newspaper, Keystone, Café, and Cooking. The newspaper is a program where we meet every Tuesday from 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm. During this program we talk about stories we would like to write about. We have an actual newspaper that is mailed to people all over Massachusetts. This program helps me in my writing skills. I am doing an opinion column for the next issue about different stereotypes in this country. Another program is Keystone. During this program we figure out ways to help the community.

This program makes me feel like a strong role model to the younger kids. It shows the younger kids how to make better choices.

The café is another program that involves kids. I help out by taking kid’s orders and helping them get the food which we sell here. This program is fun because all the kids are so cute when they order there food and when I chat with them. This program helps me in understanding kids in new ways. Last but not least, cooking, which takes place on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. We come up with random meals to cook for any of the traveling teams that are practicing. This is not only a way for me to broaden my horizons, but also I enjoy eating at the club. I enjoy doing all these things, it is just a way of returning all the good things the Club has done for me.

A Teen’s Perspective on the Dangers of Stereotyping by Bonnibel

Stereotypes are a very big problem in today’s community. All types of things are said everyday and really hurt someone’s feelings. Also, these things are virtually always lies and they hurt people’s feelings. These stereotypes make people feel like they don’t have a chance to show their true personality just because of all these lies that people tend to believe. A question that I always ask my self is “Why do people believe lies more than the truth?” If you notice, people have the habit to do that a lot. It’s uncomfortable for me because there are nasty stereotypes about where I come from, too. It makes me feel like I have no say in this because like I said people are going to believe the lies over the truth.

A stereotype that people believe about were I come from is that we are all troubles makers in a law breaking way. People think that Dominicans will always have drugs on us or that we will jump anyone to steal from them. The sad part is that we’re not the only race that are “known for that”. Many African Americans, Hispanics and Latinos supposedly are always selling drugs and fighting. We supposedly also have bad grades in school. I know plenty of African Americans, Hispanics, and Latinos that have very good grades in school. Who knows, maybe they will make a difference in others minds in the future about these lies.

That’s what I am here for. I am here to let you know that we are all equal. Who cares what skin color or race you are? It’s very wrong of people to put down others for reasons, such as race or ethnic background. I hope that society changes.

CLUB Q & A by Naomi and Brusela

We asked club members to tell us: *“What are you looking forward to this summer?”*



Casey, age 8: Go swimming in Maine. There is a nice view where we go.



John, age 11: Go visit Maine to catch fish.



Isabella, age 10: Go to the Boys & Girls Club Camp to hang out with my friends.



Michelle, age 10 : Go to the Boys & Girls Club because I love Summer Camp and all of the themed weeks.



Connor, age 9: Play basketball because I am trying to get better to make the team next year.



M.J., age 9: Going to Jellystone and playing mini golf.



Ashley, age 9: Going to Dominican Republic to see my dad.



Indira, age 9: Answer: Go to Pennsylvania to hang out with old friends.



Lily, age 9: Go to Boys & Girls Club because it is a cool place, its fun, and I can hang out with my friends



Alexandra, age 9: Play a lot because there is no school!



Isaiah, age 12: Go to Trinidad to visit my family.



Bobby, age 9: Play basketball and other sports because they are fun.



Analis, age 9: Go to Puerto Rico because it is hot all the time there



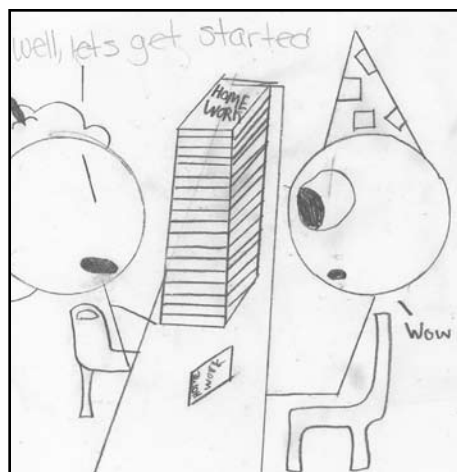
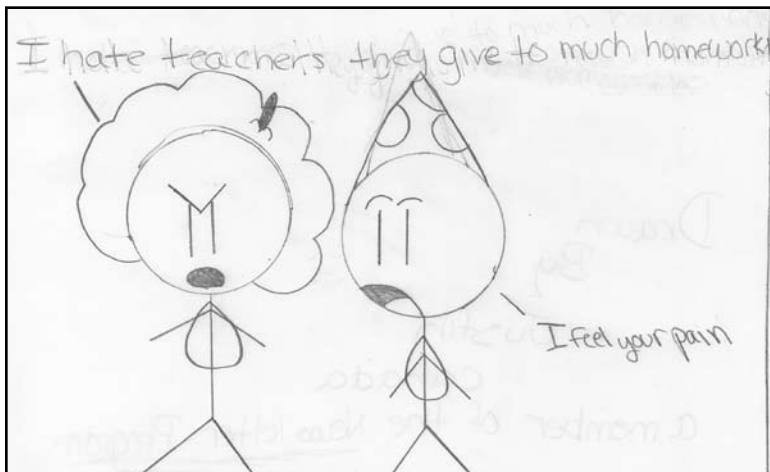
Ricky, age 8: Ride my bike to explore all over the place.



Sydney, age 11: Go to Pennsylvania to visit cousins and go to camp here!

Cartoon by What's The Word Media Club member Justin, age 11.

To be continued in the fall!



20 Minutes Later...



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Look for more from the What's The Word Media Club in Fall 2008. Have a great summer!