

# NEWSLETTER

September 1991

Volume VI Number 1

## Summertime Active for the Coalition

The Coalition's Fifth Annual Meeting brought together over fifty Coalitioners for a celebration in song. The Annual Meeting was also a forum to honor members of the community through the Coalition Peer Recognition Awards. This year, Peer Recognition Awards were issued to Dave Dunn, Organizer of the United Neighborhood Organization; Ken Russell, set up person and friendly face at all the monthly Coalition meetings; Chris Hunsinger, Executive Director of the North Adams Community Development Corporation; and Paul Hopkins, moderator for the Opinion Show and newscaster for WMNB. All recipients have made a difference in the quality of life for Northern Berkshire residents. A special award was given to State Representative Dan Bos-

## September Coalition Meeting

First Baptist Church of North Adams

131 Main St., North Adams, MA (enter via  
Eagle St Entrance)

Friday, September 13, 1991 10:00 AM to Noon

1. Welcome
2. Introduction of Participants
3. What's Happening : Announcements by  
Coalition Members of Interest to All
4. Coalition Needs Assessment : What are  
the Pressing Health and Human  
Service Issues of the Day
5. Adjournment and Conclusion

*The Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition is supported by the Berkshire Area Health Education Center with funding from the UMASS Medical School. The Coalition is hosted by North Adams State College.*

ley, who has worked hard to help Northern Berkshire stay special and who has also championed causes that have an impact on the lives of Northern Berkshireites.

The Coalition Follies  
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featured original songs and tunes with a health and human services theme. Thanks to the host of Northern Berkshire Tonight, Ken Swiatek, for his part in serving as the host of the Coalition Follies. Ken's songs and wry humor added to the performances by the Women's Services Singers, Mary Daniels' Poetic Moment; a duet of 76 trombones performed by Bob Ronnow and Dwight Killum; the Ballad of the Coalition written by Bob Dylan and Al Bashevkin; and the talented duo of Dwight Harrow and Kayte Miller who wrote and sang the Mental Health Anthem. The Follies would have been singers without an orchestra if not for the donation of kazoos (enough to equip all in attendance) by Cariddi Sales. Dwight Killum kept everyone alive with his masterful piano accompaniments. Thanks to all who helped make the Coalition Follies of Cabaret caliber. What will we do for the Coalition's Sixth Annual Meeting?

#### **Safety Net Work**

This past year, Northern Berkshire has experienced its share of economic difficulties. As the economy has dwindled,

so has the support for the infrastructure of the area. Public education, day care, health and mental health care, and statewide entitlement services have all seen fewer resources despite increased demand for services. Where is the state headed? Privatization seems to be the catch word of the present administration. Yet there are fears that, like other industries that have been deregulated (transportation, communications, banking), this process will not widen the gap between the classes in Massachusetts.

Advocacy has been stymied. But a new movement is underfoot, entitled Safety Net Work. Safety Net Work, a 501 (c) (4) non profit corporation, will engage Massachusetts residents in citizen lobbying on human service needs issues. It has been inspired and assisted by the successful citizen lobbying organization 20/20 vision which advocates on peace and environmental issues on the national level in over 170 U.S. Congressional districts. Safety Net Work asks for \$20 / year (or what people can afford), and twenty minutes a month from advocates to

address a different health and human service issue / month. Each monthly issue is chosen by a core group, which is presently forming in Northern Berkshire. To become part of the Northern Berkshire Core Group, come to the core group meeting, Thursday, September 5 at 4:30 at 85 Main St (North Adams), room 304.

#### **Help from Small Cities**

Funding for the Coalition has seen difficult times through cuts in higher education and in specific, the UMASS

**Coalition Newsletter** is a publication of the Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition. Its function is to keep the mailing informed of what's happening around the Northern Berkshire area. It is a service to the entire Coalition membership and friends (over 300 at this point). Announcements submitted to the newsletter will reach our entire mailing list. So, take advantage of this unique, free mechanism for informing our membership of news important to all. Please submit these announcements to Al Bashevkin, Coalition Coordinator, P.O. Box 1417 Bennington, VT 05201. For insertion into the October newsletter, your announcement should reach Al Bashevkin by September 24.

**Coalition Coordinator :**  
Al Bashevkin (413) 664-4511 x 519 or (802) 442-5200

Medical Center. The Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition, along with a host of health and human services programs have applied to the Small Cities applications of North Adams, Adams, and the combined application for Williamstown and other small towns for funding to continue the Coalition's work. Thanks to Arlene Schiff (North Adams), Joan Haddad (Adams), and Tom Webb (Berkshire Housing Development Corporation) for their assistance in preparing the small cities grants for Northern Berkshire. The Mass Small Cities Program is a federal program conceived to assist the low and moderate income populations of smaller towns. It is administered in Massachusetts through EOCD.

#### **Parent's Place News**

This summer saw the opening of Parent's Place, a social/educational facility for parents of Northern Berkshire. The dedication of Parent's Place on June 19th was testimony to the power of a Coalition. Berkshire Center for Families and Children and the Family Life Support Center, as co-sponsors of this program greeted parents and

agency personnel to the open house. Parent's Place schedule of activities is impressive, and with the help of the Northern Berkshire United Way, the Williamstown Community Chest, and private donors, Parent's Place was able to open its doors officially on July 1. Exciting news came from the Kellogg Foundation to Bob Ronnow (FLSC). Kellogg will fund Parent's Place to assist with operating expenses as this exciting program is getting its funding base secured. Reports are that Parent's Place is well used by parents, and is off to a good start. Parent's Place is an outgrowth of the Parenting Issues Task Force that the Coalition initiated in January of 1990. The phone number for the Parent's Place, 103 Main Street (Dowlin Block), 2nd floor, North Adams is 664-4597.

#### **UNO Neighborhood Notes**

The United Neighborhood Association, a program of the River / Hall / Bracewell Avenue area of North Adams, has seen lots of street work during the summer. The City of North Adams is upgrading the infrastructure of the neighborhood and

will finish with a street resurfacing, expected to be completed before the snow flies. Summer activity for UNO has seen increased police activity and a number of neighborhood events at the sandbanks. UNO is gearing up for its first all neighborhood meeting of the fall, scheduled for October 3 at 7 PM at the Salvation Army.

#### **Steering News**

The steering committee for the Coalition is greeting a new member as it says so long to a hard working member. Meg LeRay's term for the steering is complete, and Margie Cohan has volunteered to fill the steering vacancy. The present members of the steering committee include: Neil Novik (ex-officio), Margie Cohan (93), Kate Hill (92), Al Bashevkin, Linda Trala (92), Fred Nicholaev (91), George Mercier (91), Maggie Bittman (91), Theresa Louison (93), and Al Nelson (92). There is room for new membership to the steering committee of the Coalition. Steering Committee members commit themselves to one additional meeting / month plus the responsibility of helping to guide the coalition in its decision mak-

ing process. If you are interested in serving on the steering committee, contact any of the steering committee members.

#### **EOHHS News**

Secretary David

Forsberg, head of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services was not able to come to the Northern Berkshire area for his scheduled June 19th visit. However, Secretary Forsberg is committed to meeting with the Coalition and has

scheduled himself to attend the November Coalition meeting, scheduled for Friday, November 8 from 10 AM until noon. More on the visit from Secretary Forsberg will be in the Coalition News as November nears.

## **1990 - 91 Northern Berkshire Health and Human Services Coalition Supporters**

### **ORGANIZATIONS**

Berkshire Center for Families and Children  
Commonground, Citizens Advocacy Program  
VNA of Northern Berkshire  
Williamstown Council on Aging  
American Red Cross  
Northern Berkshire Community Action  
Pregnant Adolescent Support System (PASS)  
Northern Berkshire Family Life Support Center  
Hospice of Northern Berkshire  
Northern Berkshire Mental Health Association  
Berkshire Council on Alcoholism and Addictions  
Women's Services of Western Massachusetts  
North Adams Regional Hospital  
Berkshire Sane/Freeze  
Northern Berkshire United Way  
Northern Berkshire Comprehensive Care  
NB Committee of Department of Mental Retardation  
HelpLine, Inc.  
Alliance for the Mentally Ill  
North Adams Housing Authority  
Rape Crisis Center  
Mass Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children  
United Cerebral Palsey of Berkshire County

### **INDIVIDUALS**

Esther Tauber  
Dr Len Radin  
Warner L. Smith  
Peg Keller  
Bob Ronnow  
Gale Mason  
Michele Ethier  
Trish Kelly  
Al Bashevkin  
John Howland  
Steve Green  
Sue Walker  
Anthony Siracusa  
Margaret Soderberg  
Karen Forni Austin  
Al Nelson  
Kevin O'Connor  
Lisa Jarisch  
Kayte Miller  
James C. Livesey  
Peg Levesque  
Ray Burke  
Morton Broch  
Robert Doyle  
Doris Sadlow

## DRAFT POLICY FOR TASK FORCE AGAINST VIOLENCE

What follows is a DRAFT position statement written by Steve Ryan for the Task Force Against Violence. This position statement is a starting point for the Coalition membership to discuss positive parenting techniques as a means to deter violence in the area. The October 11th monthly meeting of the Coalition will discuss violence as its major agenda item and this draft policy in particular.

The NBHHSC affirms that all children need parental guidance and discipline and that most parents want to be able to discipline in a way that works and is helpful to children. Therefore, the Coalition will support parenting programs and professional practices that provide parents with access to training and support for learning and using nonviolent disciplinary techniques such as positive reinforcement, time-out, and verbal problem solving instead of physical punishment with their children.

Because parents who are struggling to provide their families with even the basic necessities of food, shelter, and clothing are suffering under significant levels of stress that affect all types of interactions, including discipline of children; the Coalition will support professional practice, social programs, and social policies that will allow children to have their basic needs met so that parents have the energy and emotional resources to use positive disciplinary procedures with their children.

The preferred method for abolishing physical punishment of children by their parents will be through community education, media exposure, and the distribution of parenting brochures. The Coalition will also support legislation that will lead to the banning of corporal punishment by parents and institutionalizing of parenting education for all young adults."

(The above policy statement was adapted from the policy statement approved by the National Association of Social Work Delegate Assembly, August, 1990.)

*This policy statement and other issues for the Task Force Against Violence will be debated at their next task force meeting, Thursday September 19th at 1:30 PM at the Haskins Community Center's Community Room. The entire Coalition can help to discuss ways to reduce violence during the October Coalition meeting.*

# NEWS AND VIEWS

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AMEN, A Meeting of Ecumenical Neighbors, is a newly formed awareness group which meets at 7:30 PM on the first Friday of every month at St. Mark's Parish in Adams. Representatives from Northern Berkshire Community Action, Louison House, and Parent's Anonymous have attended the meetings of the group to discuss the needs of the area. For further information about AMEN, please call Joan Lord at 743-4541 or Nancy Cwalinski at 743-4650.

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The June 1991 issue of Coalition News had an information piece entitled, "Housing Rehabilitation Funds are available for the following Berkshire County Towns." While the ad accurately advertised the availability of program funds administered by Berkshire Housing, it neglected to note that both the Town of Adams and the City of North Adams administer Housing Rehabilitation Loan Programs.

The City of North Adams is currently making available housing rehabilitation loans to income-eligible homeowners and investors. The Town of Adams has available housing rehabilitation grants. Program goals include encouraging the utilization of the existing housing stock, to provide safe and sanitary dwelling units through the elimination of code violations, to stop blight and deterioration and to protect and improve neighborhood environments. For more information in North Adams, contact Michael Nuvalle, Housing and Projects Coordinator, OCD, at 662-3025. For information about projects in Adams, call Joan Haddad at 743-7646.

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The Rapline, a telephone helpline for mental health consumers, now has two phone numbers. In addition to its regular number, 664-7988, a new number has been added, 743-1884. To talk with someone about mental health

issues, call the Rapline.

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September 24th will be the next commodity distribution by Northern Berkshire Community Action. It will be at the usual sites. For more information, call Northern Berkshire Community Action at 663-9807.

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HelpLine will be offering its next training program in September, beginning September 14th. To sign up and become a volunteer at HelpLine, call Donna Piaggi at 663-6555.

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The Family Caregiver Support Act of 1991 will offer up to \$2400 in services each year for a family with an eligible patient. Services included are companion and homemaker services, personal assistance, day services in the community, temporary care in accredited facilities, and some other day sponsored services. These

supports will make it realistic for persons with severe functional limitations to be maintained in their own home without jeopardizing the families they live with. Congressman Markey of MA and Senator Bradley of NJ are sponsors of this bill, which is reaching a critical time in its life. The Alzheimer's Association is in support of this bill.

The local Alzheimer's Association will be holding its next meeting, Tuesday, September 10 at 7:30 PM at the Downtown Adult Health Center, 107 (rear) Main St, North Adams. For information / transportation call Jean Tyler (662-2087) or Esther Tauber (458-5216).

The Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts, a non-profit reproductive health care organization, is seeking HIV+ people to work in their Educators with HIV program. These educators with HIV will be part of a comprehensive AIDS/HIV disease prevention program aimed at teens. Accompanied by Family Planning's health educators, educators with HIV

will go to local schools and youth serving organizations to share their experiences. To apply call Barbara Brown, Helen Caulton, or Dara Johnson at 413 586-2016.

Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity have selected their first partner family with whom they will be building their first home. Located on Montgomery Street in North Adams,

Craig and Angela Barr and their two children will soon be moving into their new home. NBHFH has also moved into a new office in the St Francis Parish Center in the heart of North Adams. Carol Albert is the secretary for NBHFH. Their new phone number is 664-4440. Stop by and say hi between the hours of 9 and 2 PM to see the workings of this successful organization.

### American Red Cross Offers Community Aids Education Course in North County

The Berkshire County Chapter of the American Red Cross will again offer its Community AIDS Education program in Sept - Nov, 1991. Participants will automatically be offered national certification as part of the basic course making it a ten week total program. This cycle of the program will mark the first time the program has been held in North County.

The program consists of ten training sessions in which participants receive comprehensive AIDS education training to become AIDS educators. These educators will then provide AIDS

education to their communities with Red Cross support and guidance.

The program costs \$50 and reimbursement may be available through the Berkshire AIDS Coalition. Interested people should call Mindy Domb at the American Red Cross at 442-1506 or 1800 332-2030 to preregister. The first class is scheduled to begin in North Adams on September 19 at North Adams City Hall.

**COME VISIT THE  
PARENTS PLACE**

**103 MAIN ST (DOWLIN  
BLOCK) 2ND FLOOR**

**NORTH ADAMS 664-4597  
OPEN MON - FRI 9-5**

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sep 4.....FACT Meeting Haskins Community Center Noon  
Sep 5.....Safety Net Work 85 Main St Room 304 4:30 PM
- Sep 13.....All Coalition Meeting : Needs Assessment, Baptist Church, North Adams  
10 AM to Noon
- Sep 19.....Task Force Against Violence Haskins Community Center 1 PM  
Sep 20.....Partnership for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drugs NB United Way 9 AM  
Sep 24.....Coalition Steering Committee NA City Hall 1:30 PM  
Oct 3.....United Neighborhood Organization Meeting Salvation Army 7PM  
Oct 6 - Oct 12.....Mental Illness Awareness Week  
**Activities sponsored by Northern Berkshire Mental Health during  
Mental Illness Awareness Week**
- Oct 4 - 5.....Art Show Location to be announce  
Oct 9.....2nd Step Players "Workshop on Performing Arts for Consumers of Mental Health  
Services and Others" Call 664-4541 for more details  
Oct 10.....2nd Step Players Performance entitled, " One Extreme to Another" Call 664-4541 for  
more information

YES, SIGN ME UP AS A COALITION SUPPORTER FOR 1991-92

Name \_\_\_\_\_  Individual (\$10)  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  Small Organization (\$25)  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ ( $\leq$  \$100,000 budget)  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  Large Organization (\$50)  
\_\_\_\_\_ ( $>$  \$100,000 budget)

Areas of Interest :

Are you willing to be listed as a Coalition Supporter ?  Yes  No

Checks payable to AHEC / NBHHSC Mail to Berkshire AHEC 725 North St  
Pittsfield, MA 01201