

STAFF REPORT: Recreation Department



**REPORT TO: Infrastructure and Recreation
Committee**

MEETING DATE: April 28, 2009

REPORT NO.: DOR 09 16

SUBJECT: Youth Initiatives Update

PREPARED BY: Joanna Garland, Youth Advisor

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receives Staff Report DOR 09 16, "Youth Initiatives Update" for information purposes.

B. Background

March Break

The Much Music Video Dance was a great success. Marsh Street Centre was an excellent venue. We had 170 youth attend the dance. It went very smoothly and the Youth had a great time. We had a great team of volunteers, excellent music and snacks which made for a safe and fun evening. Staff recommends this as an annual March Break event.

Youth Yoga was also another successful March Break Program. We had 8 Youth attend the class. They were all very interested in Yoga and looked forward to the next class that happens in Thornbury. They felt that having a class specially intended for Youth was a great idea and made them feel comfortable and valued. This will be something that hopefully we can continue on a regular basis throughout the year. More students voiced that they are really interested in the class but couldn't make it due to work, family and or other commitments. The interest is there for Youth Yoga. It is a healthy program we will consider running more regularly.

The Winter Survival/Loree Forest Hike did not gain as much popularity amongst the Youth ages 13-18. It was difficult to get Youth to register and commit their day. There was however more of an interest from kids ages 8-12, still not enough to run the program. Next year we will target this group rather than the older kids.

Registration for the Jam/Ipod night at the library was slim. This was another program where they had to register. Teenagers voiced that they are programmed so much throughout the year and that they didn't want to give up

their last Friday of March Break unless it was for some thing big; like the dance. They are looking for lots of “hang-out” time; unsupervised and unprogrammed. For next year, it is proposed to run the two successful programs and then put energy into the younger kids who are looking to keep busy and are not as concerned with casual socializing.

Blue Mountains Youth Film Festival

The first annual Blue Mountains Youth Film Festival was a great success. Everyone had a great time. Positive feedback from parents, teachers and Youth prevailed. There was no controversy over the content of the films. People really enjoyed the screenings and thought it was an amazing opportunity for our Youth.

We had six girls from Rocklyn Academy help us with the evening. They cleared dishes away, greeted guests, handed out brochures, made popcorn and helped clean up. It was a great chance to involve them in a community event for Youth and help them get their community hours. We also had two Youth from GBSS help us with the technical end of the evening. They ran the films for us all night. They were thrilled to be a part of the evening and gain valuable experience.

The judges were very knowledgeable and inspirational. It was nice for them to share their experience with aspiring film makers. It was a great opportunity for young film makers to be able to ask film professionals questions about the industry. They were all from the area and all under 32 years of age; making them relatable to our Youth.

The First place winner was Chris Tellez. His film was called the Bus Stop. Chris's prize was a director's chair and a \$1000.00 working contract with the Town to create a short video to promote the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Guide. This is a great example of a partnership with the Town's Environmental Initiatives and the Youth Initiatives. The second place winner was Dolena Matthews. Her prize was a package from Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). It was comprised with 6 tickets for the festival and other Toronto International Film Festival swag as well as a \$25.00 gift certificate for Thornbury Video. The third place winner was Travis Ainley. His prize was a book on creating films and a gift certificate to Squire Johns. We gave away swag bags to all participants that were filled with goodies from; Squire John's, Ashanti, Jessica's Book Nook, The Health Emporium and Thornbury Video. Everyone was happy with their prizes.

Unfortunately no one from the media came. Next year we will be more persistent in our follow ups to our invitations. We did take picture ourselves however, so we were able to submit the story to the Courier Harold. There was a lot of media when we were doing the call for submissions nevertheless we will try and keep it going up to the festival date for next year. Next year we will have more of a guideline for film content rather than leaving it open ended. Having a theme each year is an idea that could work out very well.

Overall, The Blue Mountains Youth Film Festival was created with a vision to celebrate youth culture. It was about creativity, expression, opportunity, showcasing local talent, networking and connecting with youth in our community. We are a socially and culturally diverse community with a talented bunch of youth and this festival is a clear reflection of that.

Second Youth Council Meeting

Our second Youth Council meeting was very inspiring. Adam McMullin made a guest appearance to speak to the group about the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reductions guide and how Youth can be involved. They were really excited to take this on. They are passionate about our environment. The group will assist Adam in hand delivering the guide to the community. The following Youth are committed to the council: Ayla Tymczuk, Ali Catton, Megan Harvey, Deborah Maxwell, Bryn Wilgress, Laura Goldmintz and Bri Dobson. The council is not limited to these girls but they are the core members at this point. The more people who learn about the council and see results of events and action the more Youth we will have interested in it. Events and actions the council wants to take on are: Youth Community Garden, GHG Reduction guide distribution, Youth Music Festival and developing a recognition program for Youth Friendly Businesses. I've attached the minutes of our meeting for more details.

Erika Engel attended our last meeting and is writing an article in the Courier Harold. We are working on a press release and a mission statement for the Council.

The Youth Council wants to invite Town Council and community members to use this group as a resource and a way to gain our Youth Population's perspective and insight on current events.

Up Coming Events and Action

Blue Mountains Youth Music Festival
Youth led Community Garden
Youth Friendly Business Recognition Program
Passport to Restaurant Careers

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan (

Supporting the development of social and recreational programs to meet the broad range of needs in the community.

Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.

D. Environmental Impacts

Youth are taking the initiative to inform people of the importance of reducing their GHG emissions, organic food and eating locally (community garden).

BMVFF was a Zero Waste event.

E. Budget Impact

March Break Programs- under budget

Blue Mountains Youth Film Festival-exact budget used

Youth Council Meeting- Pizza and drinks \$62.89

F. Attached

- A. Youth Council Poster
- B. Youth Council Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Garland, Youth Advisor

For more information, please contact:

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THE BLUE MOUNTAINS Youth Council

- Build Your Skills ←
- Build Your Voice ←
- Build Your Connections ←
- Build Your Community ←

**NEXT MEETING:
WEDNESDAY APRIL 1, 2009—7:00PM**

**@ THE BEAVER VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE
PIZZA PROVIDED!**

New comers welcomed!!!!

Let's Talk About...

Store 54: Free Space for Young Entrepreneurs; Climate Change: Green House Gas Reduction Community Guide; Blue Mountains Youth Music Festival; How to get Community Hours; Summer Jobs; Co-op Placements and most importantly what YOU feel our community needs for YOUTH!

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