

December, 2008

## Adams Cheshire Savoy Youth Coalition News

### The Coalition Focuses on the Importance of After School & Out of School Time for Youth

We are pleased to announce that the ACS Youth Coalition has partnered with the WestMOST (Western Massachusetts Out of School Time) network in order to help build stronger connections between school time and after school time programs. The goal of the partnership is to create collaborative community-wide plans for Adams-Cheshire to:

1. Identify collaborative priorities for youth outcomes and strategies to reach those outcomes.
2. Increase communication, coordination and collaboration between schools and ASOST programs.
3. Identify ways to increase quality of and access to ASOST programs.

Be on the lookout in the coming months for more information as we progress in this exciting and important project.

### First Aid / CPR Training

Our First Aid/CPR Class that was scheduled for December 11, was postponed due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled for Thursday, December 18.

The class will take place at Adams Memorial Middle School at 5:30. The cost for members is only \$10.

For more information, please call Carrie Crews at (413) 743-0554 or email [info@acsyouth.org](mailto:info@acsyouth.org).



**Adams Cheshire Regional Schools will be closed from December 22 through January 5 for winter vacation.**

**BArT will be dismissed for a half-day on December 23.**

**Classes will resume on January 5.**



Note From the Editor:

With all of the activity going on this time of year, its easy to get wrapped up in the details (pun intended!). Be sure to take some time away from all of the hustle and bustle to take care of yourself. Trust me,

Happy holidays and best wishes for a safe and happy new year.

Carrie Crews, Director



## Ten FREE (or close to free) Things to do with Your Family This Month!



1. **Make holiday decorations!** No matter what holiday you celebrate with your family, there are hundreds of craft ideas available on the internet. Stumped? Crayola.com and familyfun.com are great resources!
2. **Enjoy a Good Read!** On a cold winter's day, snuggle up with your family and a good book!
3. **Go Caroling!** This time of year, it's okay to be off-key. Gather up your family and friends and sing until your heart's content.
4. **Take part in Family Art Day!** It takes place on December 20, through Northern Berkshire Creative Arts (see page 4 for more info).
5. **Visit a local place of worship, like a church or synagogue.** Enjoy the sights and sounds of the holiday season in a beautiful setting. It is a great opportunity to learn about a culture different than your own.
6. **Watch holiday specials with your family.** Check your local listings or tvguide.com to see when your favorite show from your childhood will be on. Personally, even after a 24-hour marathon, I still never get sick of hearing, "You'll shoot your eye out, kid!"
7. **Make Holiday Cards!** Have the little ones draw them, or check out the free printable cards available online. (A great site with a ton of printables is familyfun.go.com)
8. **Remember our four-legged friends!** Drop off cans of pet food, blankets and pet care supplies to the Berkshire Visitors Bureau for the Berkshire Humane Society's Pet Pantry.
9. **Go "light seeing".** Now that fuel prices are becoming more reasonable, take the family for a drive through town and look at all of the holiday lights. Pop in a holiday CD, and sing together as you search for the most decorated house in town!
10. **Give lots of hugs & kisses.** It's free. It's easy. It's fun. And, mistletoe gives us a perfect excuse—even with your teenagers.



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**Specialty**  
MINERALS

# Uechi-Ryu Karate School

Traditional Okinawan Karate

at

Youth Center, Inc.

20 East Street Adams, MA

## Why Study Karate?

Uechiryu Karate teaches:

- Self Defense
- Discipline
- Self-confidence
- Relieve Stress

## Who Can Learn Karate?

Anyone can learn - Men, women, and children 6yrs old and up to any age can benefit from studying Uechiryu Karate.



## Class Schedule:

Monday ⇒ 6:00 – 7:30pm

Saturday ⇒ 2:00 – 5:30pm

## Class Fees:

The Youth Center, Inc. charges a fee based on membership. The instructors do not charge for their time.

## For more information contact:

The Youth Center, Inc. at 413-743-3550

or

Bill Meiklejohn at 413-663-8620

or

Bob Noel at 413-663-5328

20 East Street Adams, MA 01220



## The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Ice Skating Rink is Open!

The hours are Monday-Friday 11am-2pm, Friday nights 7pm-9pm, and Saturday and Sunday 2pm-4pm. The cost of admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 kids under 18, and \$1 senior citizens, and skate rentals are \$3 per pair. Birthday parties are available by calling 664-8185 to book ahead.

## Grantstation News

Grantstation is currently taking a little hiatus for the holidays. Starting in January, ACS Youth Coalition members will receive the weekly newsletter, "Grantstation Insider" via email FREE of charge! If your organization is not in need of this information, worry not—you can unsubscribe from the newsletter.

Also, if you are looking for assistance with finding resources for your project, please let us know. We are happy to work with you through Grantstation to search for funding opportunities.



## Be a Twister!

The Northern Berkshire YMCA's gymnastics team, Twisters, under the direction of new coach Kristen Levesque has room for new teammates. If you are interested in joining, please call the YMCA at 663-6529. Registration Fees apply but scholarships are available for those who qualify – no one is ever turned away from the YMCA because of inability to pay.

## Northern Berkshire Creative Arts Family Art Day!

NBCA's Family Art Day, December 20, 1pm to 3pm, will feature creating your own stylish wrapping paper and gift tags by stamping, stenciling or use of other printmaking techniques. NBCA Family Day is held every third Saturday of the month and is a fun way for parents and caregivers to work alongside their children and create art.

This event is free and open to the public but you must call NBCA to register. Please leave your name, phone number, and number and ages of children attending. For more information about NBCA, see [www.nbcreativearts.org](http://www.nbcreativearts.org) or call 663-8338.



Check out our calendar at  
[www.acsyouth.org](http://www.acsyouth.org) for up  
to the latest news & events!



### Calling all Parents, Grandparents, Foster parents, or Guardians:

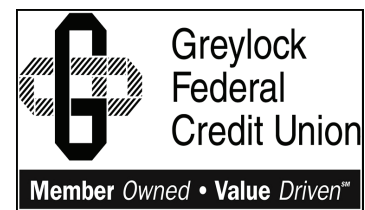
The parent-child home program has slots available for fall enrollment. This adventure through literacy with free books and toys, that you keep, is a wonderful way to play with your child. A trained home visitor will come to your home for 1 hour a week. If you have a child between 18 months and 4 years please give us a call for enrollment. We can schedule visits on Saturdays and up until early evening, if needed.

For more information please call our NEW phone number:  
Program Coordinators: Gretchen Wells or Jennifer  
Gauthier @ Child Care of the Berkshires at  
663-6593.

Bernard A. Pinsonnault  
President and Treasurer

**sbm** smith bros.-m.andrews  
*Insurance*

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**The William J. and  
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Through the Berkshire Taconic  
Foundation

# Budgeting for Holiday Shopping

From Legacy Banks



As we quickly approach the holidays, many of you are likely thinking the same thing... How can I afford to buy gifts for everyone on my list? Well, according to the Federal Trade Commission, which just recently released a list of holiday shopping tips, there are a variety of tactics to use in completing your holiday shopping while remaining on budget.

First, it's important to plan ahead. One of the worst things that you can do is wait until the last minute, when pressure overwhelms your common sense and you begin the impulse buying. In these situations, you are almost always certain to overspend and ultimately not get what you want since many of the more popular items will be sold out.

So, as you plan ahead and begin what may seem like the overpowering burden of holiday shopping, you should start by creating a practical budget. Make a list of all those who you want to buy gifts for, and then a list of potential gifts with prices attached. If you are unsure of the cost of an item, simply look online at the website of a local retailer that carries the gift or look for where you might be able to purchase it online. If you find a wide price range, take an average. It's important to list a few different choices for each person so that you have some price options.

Now that you have your list and the costs, add it up. If the total equals more than your available funds, then it's time to start saving some money.

Here's how:

- Make sure to shop around. Just because an item is marked on "sale," does not mean you are getting the lowest price. It's important to look at different options, and the Internet is a great tool to help. Be aware that some merchants mark up prices and then offer a "discount" every day.
- Consider the cost to obtain the item. If an item is available at a particular store at a discount, but the store is an hour away, is it really worth it?
- If purchasing online, make sure to check into shipping charges. Sometimes it's almost as much as the item itself.
- Ask about price matching policies. Some merchants will match the price of a competitor.
- When using coupons, make sure they are for items that you already planned to purchase and that they don't force you into purchasing something extra to receive the "savings."
- If you purchase something at full price, and it goes on sale the following week, ask for a price adjustment – many merchants will honor the sale price.
- As you find the best "deal" and make your purchases, it's important to also be mindful of the following:
  - Track your spending. Purchases add up quick especially if you're not keeping track.
  - Keep your receipts. You may need them for returns or sale adjustments.
  - Explore return policies. There are many different stipulations that may be part of return policies. Make sure you fully understand how and when you can return an item.
- Keep careful track of your wallet or purse. The holiday season is the perfect time for pick-pockets to make their move. Keep cash stored securely away and keep a close eye on debit and credit cards. If your card is lost or stolen, be sure to report it right away.

With some careful planning and disciplined budgeting, you can buy something for everyone on your list. If you have any questions about money management, you can visit the Federal Trade Commission website at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or [www.MyMoney.gov](http://www.MyMoney.gov).

## “Youth Center Inc. Announces The American Red Cross’s Babysitter’s Training Course”

The purpose of the American Red Cross Babysitter’s Training course is to provide youth with the information and skills necessary to provide safe and responsible care for children in the absence of parents or guardians. This training helps participants develop skills in leadership and professionalism, basic care, safety, and safe play.

The course is scheduled for Monday, December 29th from 11:00am to 3:00pm and Tuesday, December 30th from 11:00am to 3:00pm. The course takes place at The Youth Center (20 East St, Adams). The course is open to girls and boys ages 11-15. The fee is \$45 per participant, with drinks and snacks provided. Please bring a bag lunch.

For more information, and to sign up, call Dave at 743-3550.

### The POWER of ONE! Martin Luther King Day Celebration

**Monday,  
January 19, 2009  
10:00am-1:30pm**

**at MCLA  
Church St. Center**



**Everyone Welcome!!  
No Cost/Free All Day**

Coffee/Refreshments @ 10:00  
Morning Program @10:30  
Free Luncheon @ 12:30

Sponsored by the Martin Luther King Committee,  
And Funded by:  
\* The North Adams Human Services Commission  
\* The Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire  
\* The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition  
\* MCLA

Have you got info you’d like to share? Email us at [info@acsyouth.org](mailto:info@acsyouth.org) to have your news included in our newsletter!

We will also add your events to our online calendar!

### Did You Know...

The Berkshire Humane Society does educational outreach programs for youth?

For more information, contact Karen Karlberg, Community Outreach Coordinator at (413) 447-7878 ext. 29 or [bhskaren@berkshire.rr.com](mailto:bhskaren@berkshire.rr.com). When you do, be sure to say hello to Noah the therapy providing Alaskan Malamute.



**Join hundreds of North Berkshire families!**

# Join Safe Homes!

What is Safe Homes? Safe Homes of North Berkshire is a network of parents who pledge that they

(1) will be at home when their teens have parties and (2) will not allow the illegal use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco at teen parties in their home or on their property. Pledge signers must renew the pledge each year. The list of Safe Homes parents is published periodically in a Safe Homes pamphlet distributed throughout North County, in advertisements, and elsewhere.

Why Safe Homes? Many parents feel that “they are the only ones” who want a safe, drug- and alcohol-free environment for their children and feel uncomfortable talking to other parents and to youth about their concerns. Research shows that parents who set clear rules, monitor their teens’ activities, and provide a safe environment greatly lower the risk that their children will be involved in using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Who Should Join? North Berkshire parents and guardians of children in Grades 6-12.

## How to Join:

1. Review the parent pledge below.
2. Tell your children that you are joining Safe Homes, and discuss it with them.
3. Sign and return the pledge form below to: **Northern Berkshire Community Coalition,**  
**61 Main Street, Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247.**



Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

This project is sponsored by the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, and is guided by the Safe Homes Support Team of area parents. To protect parents from embarrassment, names on the Safe Homes list are subject to approval by an advisory committee of local police and school administrators. When the committee has concerns about a listing, the name is taken off the list. For information, please contact Lois Daunis ([lDaunis@nbccoalition.org](mailto:lDaunis@nbccoalition.org)) or Jenna Cece ([jcece@nbccoalition.org](mailto:jcece@nbccoalition.org)) at (413) 663-7588 or the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, 61 Main St. Suite 218, North Adams, MA 01247.



## PARENT PLEDGE Please print clearly! Thank you!



I, \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent name – please print clearly)

...would like to have my name added to this year’s list of North Berkshire SAFE HOMES parents and realize that by doing so, I am agreeing that:

I, \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent name – please print clearly)

**\* I will not allow teen parties in my home or on my property when I am not present.**

**\* I will not allow the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs by teens in my home or on my property.**

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade levels of your children: \_\_\_\_\_

# Promises in Action!



## Caring Adults!

Liz Baker, Director of Youth Center Inc. with Santa & Rudolph.



## Healthy Start!

Youth getting active at a Uechi –Ryu Karate class!



## Safe Places!

The Adams Free Library offers a host of family friendly activities! (Photo courtesy of [www.town.adams.ma](http://www.town.adams.ma))



## Opportunities to Help Others!

Youth volunteers at Youth Center Inc.'s Make It Take it Fair



## Effective Education!

Karen Karlberg of the Berkshire Humane Society teaches AMMS students how to be responsible pet owners.

Have you got Promise Pics?

Email them to  
[info@acsyouth.org](mailto:info@acsyouth.org) and we will  
post them in our newsletter  
and on the web!