

South End Teen Center Newsletter

Issue: June - December 2018



A Dedication

Reflecting on the past year we have gained so much, but have also lost as well. We are highlighting two people who have given a tremendous amount to the Teen Center and helped shape it into what it is today.

Cheryl Leonard oversaw the SETC as the Community Initiatives manager for several years. While her role was (on paper) largely administrative and budget-centered, her care and dedication to the SETC and its teens extended far beyond those important responsibilities. We are extremely thankful for the kindness and dedication to this beloved program and wish her well with the next chapter of her life.

Our second dedication is for Sister Cecile Chagnon, who passed away in December. Sisters Cecile, Dorine and Judy have been tremendous friends and supporters of the SETC over the years. Sister Cecile's visits were always enjoyed by all, especially the teens. Coordinator Ryan Kneeland and previous Coordinator Stephen Soule attended her service, which was a celebration of her kindness, unparalleled sense of humor, dedication to her faith, community and its children.



Cheryl Leonard



Sister Cecile Chagnon

SETC Coordinator's Corner

The South End Teen Center has been bursting from the rafters! With attendance increasing by over 43% during the past school year, the SETC has been hard at work to meet the demand of quality after-school programming by adding new personnel and improving the teen-to-adult ratio.

The SETC is poised to for the current school year with the addition of three Thomas College work-study students, including the excellent Arielle, returning after fitting in so well this past spring! Joining her in the ranks are Oliver and Ally who bring energy, talent and heart on a daily basis.



Arielle



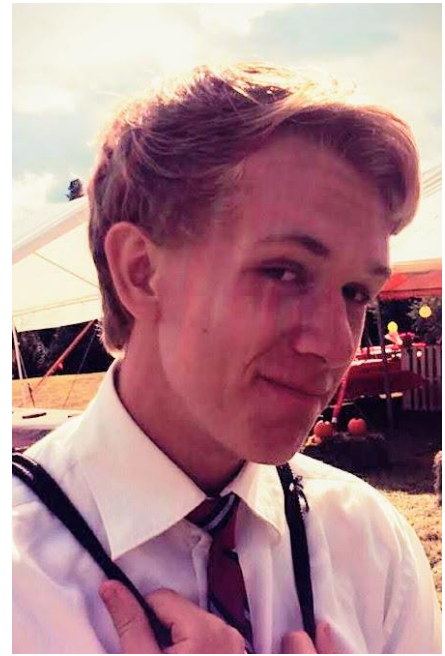
Ally



Ollie

June 2018 – Graduation Time!

June is always a time of mixed emotions at the SETC. On one hand, it is a time of excitement for many youngsters who become eligible to join the SETC as brand-new 6th graders. On the other hand, it is time to wish our graduates well with pride after helping shepherd them through their teenage years. We had one senior member in 2018, Cody Quirion, and he made us proud by graduating from Waterville High School. Cody was also a recipient of the J&J Driver's Education Scholarship at the SETC, which evolved into the successful acquisition of his driver's license. A hard worker, Cody gained employment with a local landscaping company while in school and currently is an employee at Shaw's Supermarket. He is always a pleasure to have around due to his affability, kindness, inquisitiveness, and heart. Keep moving forward, Cody, and don't forget to visit!



Cody Quirion

July and August 2018 – Summer Blast Trips!

Each summer the Teen Center organizes weekly Summer Blast trips throughout the region to keep our teens active and engaged, and to experience fun and new activities. This summer we went to Benton Family Fun Park, Funtown-Splashtown (a special trip for our Teen Stars), Sunbeam Roller Rink, Reid State Park, G-Force Laser Tag and Get Air!

We'd like to extend thanks to many of these establishments who worked with the Teen Center to ensure we could make these trips to come to fruition. We filled many cars and vans with teens this summer. Among these 6 trips we filled 89 seats! Photos tell a far better story than words. Enjoy!





September 2018 – New school year and New team member!

In the fall, we welcomed Benjamin Howard to the team to help teens academically as well as vocationally, at which he absolutely excels! Ben brings with him a deep compassion and desire to learn about who our community's teens are, and formulates creative ways to help them achieve in multiple aspects of their lives. The Youth Outreach Worker fills a flexible, much-needed niche within the Teen Center and community. He can also support teens for up to a year after graduation, a crucial bridge where a lot of vital support can suddenly disappear. As Ben builds his caseload of about 20 teens, he is making connections and changing lives. Welcome aboard, Ben!



October 2018 – Fall Time!

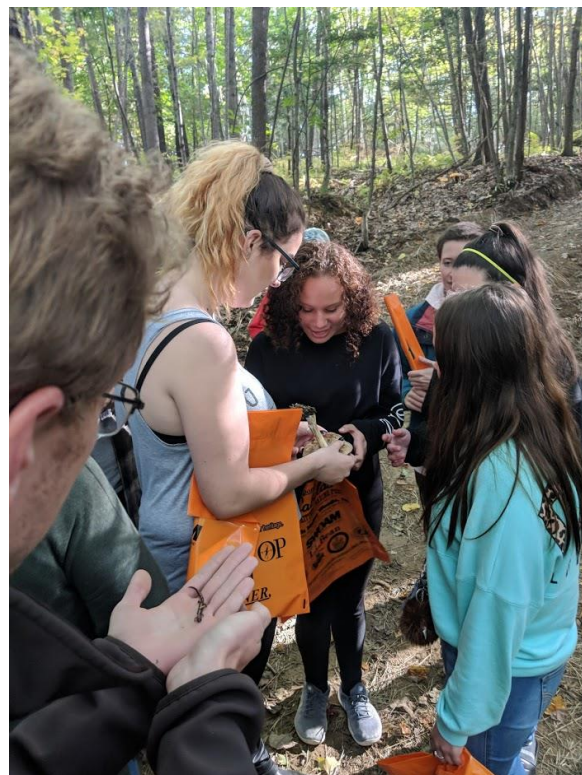
As fall took hold and our new staff became more deeply immersed in the Teen Center, we decided to step up our Halloween game. Thomas work-study student Oliver is a very skilled craftsman, and with the teens they created a candy-coffin! Anna, our resident decorating maestro, guided the teens into transforming the interior of the Teen Center with fabulous and creative decorations. Also, the kind folks at Centerpoint Community Church provided a shuttle which transported families from the South End to their Trunk or Treat event!

As you may recall, there was some rain on Halloween but we were prepared with our tent. Teens helped decorate and gave candy to the neighborhood children, while also engaging them with Halloween games.



Continued...October 2018

We were also re-acquainted with our old friend Mike Guarino from the Maine Arts Academy. A member from his team was injured so we couldn't take our annual canoe trip down the Kennebec, but he came up with another great idea – a mushroom identification hunt! We visited the trails of Thomas College and found many interesting fungi and even salamanders. We learned from Mike that there are great apps available on our phones which can quickly identify and tell us more about various plants and mushrooms found all around us – very cool!



November 2018 – Thankful!

November was filled with fun events and heartfelt thanks. Once again, Centerpoint Church reached out to the Teen Center and offered 15 Thanksgiving baskets for families to ensure that all our teens' families had the means to a proper Thanksgiving meal. Turkey with ALL the fixings!

Professional artist Doug Frati spent an afternoon with us to demonstrate and teach how he creates his unique wood carvings. Many teens learned how to use new tools and gained some new skills. It's amazing what one can create with a simple idea, a piece of wood, a couple gouges, and black paint!

Community volunteer Bonnie Davis helped the teens construct "potato cages," a unique way of growing potatoes vertically to maximize gardening space. Samuel McClean from Healthy Northern Kennebec and SNAP-Ed helped us maintain them (as well as the rest of our bountiful garden). Our potatoes were planted a little late in the growing season, but we did harvest a very large bowl full of potatoes! They roasted perfectly and were delicious!

We had a lot to be thankful for in November and sincerely thank our community volunteers for bringing their talents, heart, skills and passions to the SETC!



Donations bring holiday cheer to Teen Center members

This year, thanks to many generous donors, our Teen Center members had a holiday to remember. The Faith Evangelical Free Church in Waterville requested wish lists from our teen members, and then donated many of desired items for our members, along with 4 large food baskets. The Healthy Waterville Action Team donated an additional 15 food baskets, providing enough holiday fare for all of the members whose families were strapped this season.

The Waterville VFW Post #1285 contributed 15 Mid-Maine Chamber gift cards for our members. A neighbor donated gift bags with an array of personal hygiene products, and a former staff member provided some much-loved new brand name clothing. In addition, the Teen Center received over \$2,000 in monetary donations, which help support the enriching activities it offers daily throughout the school year and during the summer.

We are so grateful for the outpouring of support, and for giving our teens the chance to experience the magic of the holiday season. Thank you for reminding them that they, too, are valued members of our community!



Mission Moments



Sam and Hunter celebrate a successful year at Joseph's Steak House!



Demo and Colby review applications to see who should be interviewed for a position at the SETC.



Gracie is our top points earner! Here she shows the brand new Adidas joggers she worked so hard for!



Madison displays all of the Bull Moose Music gift cards he earned for his involvement at the SETC!



Aaron is proud of all the hard work he put in at school and at the SETC! Here he is with \$40 to Scotty's Pizza!



Tyler and Madison at KVCAP's Community Celebration.



SETC member Harley at KVCAP's Community Celebration.

More Mission Moments



Meeting with Detective Daryl Gordon of Waterville Police Department and Kathleen Paradis from the Sexual Assault and Crisis and Support Center to provide sexual assault education.



SETC member Wayne after his beatboxing performance during the Alford Youth Center's Annual Appeal. He earned a \$500 scholarship for his efforts!



Devin, 2018's recipient of the J&J American Heritage Tour scholarship, at the White House.



Hunter, Colby and Dylan representing the Teen Center during the Sunrise Rotary Mini Golf Tournament to benefit the SETC.

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