



Kim Ferrara of WiggleKids chases children and parents with a pool noodle at the Greene Family Fun Night.

Families enjoy a night of fun at Greene Elementary

The second Family Fun Night of the new year took place at the William S. Greene Elementary School.

Partners School Wellness Coordinator Marcia Picard welcomed 260 parents and children to participate in a program that engages them in some healthy movement while learning about nutrition and a range of community resources that they can access to maintain or improve their health.

Participants were offered sessions on nutrition by the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program and one on movement with Kim Ferrara and Ashley Field of WiggleKids. Participants also had the opportunity to speak with representatives of eighteen agencies and Partners for a Healthier Community covering its Soda-Free Challenge.

Family Fun nights are held at a variety of schools in the Greater Fall River Area.

Safe spaces created for teens at local agencies



While older teens hang out in the upstairs teen room, middle school aged kids enjoy playing basketball in the gym on the first Teen Night held at the Fall River Boys and Girls Club.

The Fall River Youth Violence Prevention Task Force identified safe spaces for young people to gather in the community as



Silvia Elementary School children are given time to play in buckets of snow brought in from outside.

Silvia School children are given class time for free play

Children at the Frank M. Silvia Elementary School were invited to spend time during their school day engaged in play on Global School Play Day.

According to Peter Gray of Psychology Today, children are designed, by nature, to spend huge amounts of time playing freely. That's how they develop social, emotional, and physical skills, and it's how they become creators and innovators. It's also how they learn to take charge of their own lives.

Today's children have less opportunity to play than their parents had and far less opportunity than their grandparents had, and we are seeing the consequences in higher rates of anxiety and depression in children.

The Silvia School was one of hundreds of schools across the world to take part in "School Play Day, spending about 45 minutes throughout the day using their imaginations and improving team building.

the top priorities for youth.

A pilot event was held that will help the task force launch a safe places initiative sponsored by the Mayor's Youth Council and the Citizens for Citizens Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program who worked with the Fall River Boys and Girls Club to create a Teen Night at the Club.

The first event was a free fun night for high school students with a three on three basketball tournament with prizes, music, pizza and more. Close to a hundred teens showed up for the first of a series of three-hour events to be staffed at different agencies by volunteer staff. Teens will pay \$20 to cover costs of food and beverages for the entire series.

The Greater Fall River Health CONNECTION is published four times a year by Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. P.O. Box 1228 Fall River, MA 02722

Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc., the local Community Health Network Area (CHNA) is organized by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish a working partnership between DPH and area residents to improve the health status of all those who live or work in the CHNA

Partners is supported by DPH Factor 9 funding from Saint Anne's Hospital and numerous other grants.



2014-2019 Priority Strategy Areas

Factor I: Diet & Exercise

Factor II: Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Use Prevention

Factor III: Sexual Activity and Infectious Diseases

Factor IV: Access to Quality Dental, Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Care

Factor V: Education, Employment, Income and Disability

Factor VI: Community Safety and Violence Prevention

Factor VII: Family, Cultural and Social Support, and Housing

Factor VIII: Environment and Infrastructure



Greater Fall River Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. P.O. Box 1228 Fall River, MA 02722

Participating Organizations

Arbour Counseling
BMC Health Net Plan
Bristol County District Attorney
Bristol Elder Services
Catholic Social Services
Citizens for Citizens, Inc.
City of Fall River
Board of Park Commissioners
Community Development Agency
Community Maintenance Council on Aging
Health & Human Services
Mass In Motion
Street Tree Planting Program
Tobacco Control Program
Youth Services
Dog Tag Navigators
Fall River Housing Authority
Fall River Police Department
Fall River Public Schools
Fall River WIC Program
Family Recovery Project
Family Service Association
First Baptist Church
Gr. F.R. Chamber of Commerce
Greater Fall River Re-Creation
Green Futures
Habit OPCO
HealthFirst Family Care Center
Katie Brown Educational Program
Mass. Department of Public Health
NHP Ship's Cove Apartments
People, Incorporated
Diabetes Association, Inc.
Early Intervention Program
Seven Hills Behavioral Health
SCI AmeriCorps
Southcoast Health
Saint Anne's/Steward Hospital
Stanley Street Treatment & Resources
The Trustees of Reservations
Thomas Chew Mem. Boys & Girls Club
Town of Somerset
Town of Swansea
Town of Westport
United Neighbors of Fall River
United Interfaith Action
Y.M.C.A. of Greater Fall River

Partners Web Sites:

www.GFRPartners.com
www.HealthyCityFallRiver.org
www.FallRiverFitnessChallenge.com
www.SouthCoastWorksiteHealth.com
www.MyFallRiver.org

The Greater Fall River Health CONNECTION

Vol. 13 No. 2

Spring 2017

Connecting the people of Greater Fall River to improve our quality of life and health

Dozens of volunteers get ready to spring into summer on the Quequechan River Rail Trail!



Mass in Motion Fall River Coordinator Julie Kelly heads out on the Alfred J. Lima Quequechan River Rail Trail Debbie Elias, a retired Liberty Utilities employee.

Starting in April, the Quequechan River Rail Trail will become a beehive of activity throughout the spring and summer with events planned to bring people to enjoy this beautiful area.

"We want to invite everyone who has yet to experience the Trail to join us for any or all of these events so they can get to see what they've been missing," noted Janice Velozo who is coordinating the events as part of the 1422 Project (see column, next page).

The Trail, named for its original designer and local activist Alfred J. Lima, will be completed this spring as part of a six million dollar project managed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

The 1.2 mile bicycle and walking path extends from close to the Westport line west almost to Plymouth Avenue in the center of the City, with a tunnel connection under-Route 195 that runs near the Trail to Rodman Street and the City's South End.

Within the first few months of opening, walkers discovered a magnificent display of wildlife and flora that had been inaccessible for the past 130 years when the original rail line that served the nearby mills closed.

People can see a spectacular display of over fifty photographs of birds, turtles, and flowers that grace the Trail by visiting the Stairway

Galleries in Government Center.

"A number of local photographers have documented the abundance of natural beauty that can be found on the Trail," commented Fall River Mass in Motion Coordinator Julianne Kelly. "You will be amazed at what these photographers have found just by spending time on the Trail."

Others who take photos on the Trail will be able to enter their work in a "Nature in the City" photo contest. Winners will be included in a Fall River Portraits photo exhibit at the Narrows Center for the Arts during the month of June.

In order to make sure the Trail is well maintained, a Friends of the Quequechan River Rail Trail group has been formed and is in the process of organizing the first clean-up of the season to be held on Saturday, April 22nd, from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Anyone is invited to help out by dressing for work in a wet environment and wearing appropriate footwear. Equipment will be provided by the City.

The Friends group is also working to form a non-profit corporation so it can apply for grants and donation. The group is also engaged in efforts to promote the Trail among schools, senior centers and other groups in the area who want to schedule

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Mass in Motion Fall River Coordinator Julianne Kelly asks for reactions and suggestions from the audience about maintaining and using the Quequechan River Rail Trail for a variety of events at an organizational meeting of the "Friends of the Quequechan River Rail Trail" held in the Government Center Hearing Room.

Profiling Paula Beaulieu



Paula Beaulieu is on a mission to help Fall River residents lead a healthier lifestyle.

She directs the “1422 Project” that seeks to 1) reduce rates of death and disability due to tobacco use, 2) reduce the prevalence of obesity, and 3) reduce the rates of death and disability due to diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The grant also supports efforts to help people manage conditions such as high blood pressure and pre-diabetes.

This grant fits nicely into the goals of the Stanley Street Treatment and Resources (SSTAR) facility where Paula works. “So many of our patients have these conditions,” says Paula, “that a program that targets them makes a lot of sense for us.”

“We’re already making changes in the way we work with our patients, including getting more of them to eat a healthier diet and to engage in regular exercise,” she states.

SSTAR has hired several community health workers who support patients in making healthy lifestyle changes. The facility has is also in the process of making changes in the food served in the inpatient cafeteria and has started distributing fresh produce in cooperation with the Boston Food Bank.

“It’s going to take a while, but we’re already seeing positive changes among our patients,” she added.



Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staff members Molly Cardoza and Ken Champlin join Janice Voloza and UMass-Dartmouth anthropology professor Andrea Klimt on last summer’s history walk.

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Staff member Janice Voloza will help groups coordinate their events on a master calendar so there is coordination among events.

One of the first events of the season will take place on Wednesday, April 19th from 3:15 to 5:15 p.m. with a Living History Walk organized with the help of three UMass-Dartmouth students. At this event, reenactors will interpret the life of textile workers who worked in the mills along the river, as well as describing the history of the river and describing the development of the new Trail.

Other events will include bicycle helmet give-aways for children and several scheduled walking series, including a Walk to Summer every Tuesday at noon from March 28 through May 30th and an evening walk at 5:30 p.m. every Wednesday starting on April 12th.

Information on all of the walking events are always posted on www.WalkFallRiver.org and on Facebook/Walk Fall River and Facebook/Quequechan River Rail Trail pages.



Keystone Member Jana, Marcia Picard, Susan Phenix, Tom Khoury and Eric Andrade participate in a discussion group at the recent Confronting Discrimination session.

Discrimination confronted at the Boys and Girls Club

Over thirty students from B.M.C. Durfee High School and Bishop Connelly High School and a number of adult leaders attended the fourth of five sessions that are being provided to various groups of youth around the city to learn how to confront discrimination and prejudice in their own lives and the lives of their fellow students.

Held at the Fall River Boys and Girls Club in March, the goal of the meeting was for everyone to understand the connection between oppression and violence, understand the significance of empathy in healthy community relations, understand how insensitive rhetoric can create tension in community relations, recognize the role of privilege and how to use privilege to be an anti-oppression ally.

The training is a project of United Neighbors of Fall River and Partners and was led by Social Capital Inc. AmeriCorps Jay Wong.

New SNAP HIP program will double veggie dollars



Maria Infante of Project BREAD describes the HIP Program at a recent United Neighbors of Fall River Community Partnership meeting.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

(DTA) a grant through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program to expand its Healthy Incentives Pilot into a Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) that will serve participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) statewide.

Starting in April, the program will provide a 100 percent incentive – a dollar-for-dollar match – for each SNAP dollar spent on fruits and vegetables purchased at farmers’ markets, farm stands, mobile markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs statewide.

These incentives will be calculated and instantly applied to the SNAP recipient’s EBT card, and information on the incentive earned and SNAP account balance will be provided.



CLF Director of Research and Partnerships Vedette Gavin, left, begins her review of the project by asking for a show of hands regarding participants’ familiarity with the study

Flint survey results reported

Members of survey teams from Fall River and New Bedford recently met at the Fall River YMCA to report findings of a survey that they conducted to measure the impact of environmental conditions, particularly mixed-income, mixed-use, transit oriented real estate development (“TOD”) projects, on health in nine Eastern Massachusetts neighborhoods.

The study tracks neighborhood changes across multiple domains to include economic, social, behavioral, environmental, and health outcome indicators. Taken together, these indicators can provide important new insights about the connections between the built environment, opportunity, behavior, and health.

The Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) received a two year planning grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to collect baseline data and design a longitudinal research study that will track environmental conditions and health in neighborhoods, including the Flint in Fall River.



Fall River Mass In Motion coordinator and SSTAR Prevention Coordinator Eric Andrade joins Michael Vaillancourt and Priscilla Andrade in stocking the freezer.

Freezers given by H-P Healthcare

The Gates of Hope Food Pantry in the former Davol School on Flint Street was the recipient of the first freezer donated by Harvard-Pilgrim Health Care.

A \$10,000 grant was awarded to Fall River’s Mass in Motion Program and Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. to purchase freezers for the City’s food pantries as well as \$2,000 for frozen food to stock the freezers.

“We’re very grateful for this grant,” explained Faith Scallion who operates the Flint Street facility. “We often receive donations of frozen food but have no way of storing it so it can be distributed to families in need. This donation is wonderful,” she added.

Mass in Motion Fall River staff members Julianne Kelly and Eric Andrade are working to ensure that more freezers will be purchased for local food pantries to enable them to supply low-income people with frozen vegetables when fresh produce is not available.

Head Start teachers learn about healthier snacks



United Neighbors Executive Director Wendy Garf-Lipp, right, poses questions about what makes a snack healthy.

To help Head Start teachers make better choices for snacks served in school, United Neighbors of Fall River, Executive Director Wendy Garf-Lipp, Partners’ School Wellness Coordinator Marcia Picard

and Partners Executive Director Dr. David Weed presented to sixty Head Start teachers during a staff training session.

The presenters challenged the teachers to rate a series of common snack items and to suggest which ones meet their own criteria for healthy items.

Much of the emphasis of the session was on the sugar content of many snack items, especially those that are advertised as lower in fat which contain lots of sugar.

Dr. Weed stressed the importance of dietary fats in supplying essential vitamins A, D, E and K, including the healthy fat in whole milk, a conclusion backed by current research on children’s diets.

Upcoming Events

April 3rd, Noon to 2:00 p.m.
Preventing Problem Gambling in Southeastern Massachusetts. Gifford Building, Taunton State Hospital, Taunton, MA. Call Ola at 617-618-2664 with questions.

April 8th, 10:00 am.-1:00 pm
Year of the Young Child Literacy Fair, Kuss Middle School, 52 Globe Mills Avenue, FR. Call Barbara Allard at 508-675-8421 for more details.

April 19th, 3:15 to 5:15 p.m.
Living History Walk on the Quequechan River Rail Trail. Enter at any entrance to the Trail and learn from reenactors along the way about textile workers and the evolution of the River. Call Julie Kelly at 508-324-2405 for more information.

April 21st, 6:00 p.m.
Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge Finale, Eagle Performing Arts Center, 35 North Main Street, Fall River. Call Annemarie Holly, 508-679-0922 for details and tickets.

April 22nd, 9:00 a.m. to Noon
Earth Day River Clean-up. Meet at Britland Park at the end of 17th Street. Park in the Wordell Street lot. Come dressed for heavy, dirty and wet work. For more information, contact Julie Kelly at 508-324-2405.

May 13th, 9:00 a.m.- Noon
American Heart Association Heart Walk, Ring Road, UMass-Dartmouth. Register at 8:00 a.m. Sign up at www.SNEHeartWalk.org