

Subject: Quarterly e-news

Thank you for subscribing to the Squamscott Community Commons monthly newsletter. We value your interest and support, as we work together to create a community center to serve the Greater Seacoast region.

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March 2009

www.squamscott.org

Commons Sense: Monthly Column in the Exeter NewsLetter

Read about The Commons the third Tuesday of every month in "Commons Sense," our column in the *Exeter News-Letter*.

Community members will offer perspectives based on their fields of expertise. Learn about The Commons and how it will change our community through a variety of viewpoints and experiences.

Participating Agencies

Exeter Center for Creative Arts
providing high quality arts education and resources for



Squamscott Volunteers Hit the Road

On March 11, a group of 15 Squamscott Community Commons and YMCA volunteers took a "field trip" to the new Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA in Marblehead, Massachusetts. At Squamscott Community Commons we are currently in the phase of planning our "bricks and mortar", but for this day we were treated to a vision of the bricks and mortar brought to life. This YMCA is comparable in scope and design to the Squamscott project. It is also a new generation YMCA; incorporating green design, materials and concepts that are fresh and welcoming. The 90,000 square foot facility itself is beautiful and efficient, with natural light streaming in through the windows and replacing old images of fluorescent lighting, dampness and chlorine odor.

Though the "seeing" was impressive, it was the "feeling" of the

people of all ages and abilities in the community.

Great Bay Kids' Company
providing quality early childhood education and school-age enrichment programs for children.

Richie McFarland Children's Center
helping young children reach their full developmental potential and supporting their families through the process.

Rockingham Community Action
preventing, reducing and working towards the elimination of poverty by helping people in need.

SeaCare Health Services
providing access to medical care for uninsured adults, prescription assistance for low-income families and home visiting & health education services for uninsured children.

Southern District YMCA/Camp Lincoln
creating strong kids, strong families and strong communities through the operation of a full service recreational facility for Seacoast residents of all ages and economic capacities.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Richie McFarland's 3rd
Annual Spelling Bee
Saturday, April 4

heartbeat of the YMCA on a cold and rainy Wednesday morning, that was most inspiring. Jane Oldfield-Spearman observed, "At the off-peak time of 11:00 in the morning, the grand foyer was buzzing with activity and energy. On the tour we saw children in the preschool center and drop-in childcare room who were playing and decorating their classrooms with artwork; groups of young parents were chatting while they watched their kids take swimming lessons; toddlers were playing ball with parents in the gymnasium for an open activity time; adults of all ages were working out in the fitness area and taking exercise classes; auditions for a YMCA sponsored theater production of "Annie", special teen nights and teen exercise classes were advertised; summer camp registrations were being taken; a young child was having a lively conversation with an elder woman in the locker room." Another favorite scene was of the father dressed in weight lifting gear who took a break from his routine to peer into the free babysitting room where his toddler was enjoying story time.

The new generation YMCA is so much more than a building; it's a lifestyle with activities to interest almost anyone. The environment and programming say, "Welcome, whoever you are, we have something for you." The fitness facilities and programming cater from the serene to the extreme; with yoga, zumba, aerobics, cardio machines, weight lifting and rock climbing to name just a few. The YMCA has become quite popular with the local teen population and there are special hours to accommodate their particular energy and needs. Elementary-aged children who participate in the after school program take a bus directly after the last bell for a much needed change of pace. Birthday parties are hosted throughout the weekend with special packages geared to the children's interests. Special camps are available, not only during summer vacation, but during school breaks as well. Families can plan to let the television go black; kids will be otherwise engaged with fun filled, active and educational activities.

With an on-site rehabilitation and physical therapy center we had a glimpse of the additional benefits that will be offered through our partnering agencies. At Squamscott Community Commons our partner agencies will add even more dimensions such as arts and enrichment and accessible health care and wellness services.

The Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA has been open for just 4 months, already has 10,000 members, and employs 200 full and part-time people. Executive Director Paul Gorman candidly shared the story of

1-4:00 pm
Exeter High School

To register or for sponsorship opportunities, visit www.richiemcfarland.org

Little River Clean-up
Wednesday, April 22
9:00 am

To commemorate Earth Day, student volunteers from Phillips Exeter Academy will remove trash and debris from the banks of the Little River and adjacent walking trails behind the old junior high school building.

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Camp Lincoln and Camp Gundalow summer camp programs are filling quickly. Please check www.ymcacamplincoln.org to determine which sessions are still available.

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CONGRATULATIONS to Richie McFarland Children's Center, named Exeter Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year!

how they made the vision a reality. The fundraising goals, the timeline, and the donor base were all comparable to what we face within our own project. We were reassured that we can successfully and proudly build this community center for our own families and future generations. Through our visit to the Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA we have gained a valuable advisor and advocate for our project; one who is willing to share many of the lessons learned along the path. We also gained a strong dose of confidence and encouragement that we can build, and even improve upon, this model inter-generational center.

For more information about the Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA, please visit www.northshoreymca.org.

Jen
Capital Campaign Steering Committee

Chinburg



The Power of Collaboration

Two Seacoast titans of children's care will unite at Pease International Tradeport to add a new child care option. With the increasing need for infant and young child care for the working community at Pease International Tradeport, Great Bay Kids' Company and the Richie McFarland Children's Center will collaborate to open two new centers under one roof in September.

"The reason we have decided to expand is in response to a request from the community," said Wendy Monroe, executive director of Great Bay Kids' Company. "There are a lot of people working in Pease, so we needed to have an additional child care center there."

Great Bay and Richie McFarland Children's Center have long and overlapping local histories. Great Bay began 41 years ago, when a group of concerned citizens formed the Newmarket Community Action Council for Day Care Centers to address child care needs of the community.

Richie McFarland Children's Center was founded in 1971 when a group of Seacoast parents recognized the need for social and therapeutic services to children with special needs.

Great Bay was chosen from a group of applicants to lease the new child care facility being built at 81 New Hampshire Ave. in the tradeport. With sufficient additional space, the company has chosen to share the facility with the Richie McFarland Children's Center in hopes of mutually serving working families and their children.

"We will have the ability to work right alongside early childhood educators," said Peggy Small-Porter, executive director of Richie McFarland Children's Center. "There will be lots of cross-training between the two centers."

Monroe and Small-Porter's organizations will be future tenants of Squamscott Community Commons, a community center that will be built in Exeter and will serve as home for nonprofit agencies and a YMCA.

After working together on the Commons project, it became apparent to both executive directors that collaborating at the Pease center would create a beneficial alliance for the tradeport community.

Dan Plummer, president of commercial real estate developers Two International Group, is the project manager for the construction. The two-story building will feature two play yards and classroom space for Great Bay to serve up to 220 children, from ages 6 weeks to 5 years old, Monday through Friday, for 51 weeks a year.

The Richie McFarland Children's Center will serve 50 special needs children at the new location, in addition to the 300 children and families they serve annually. A multi-purpose room for Great Bay will be built for school-age children and kindergarten care during school vacations and the summer. Small-Porter is enthusiastic about the improved benefits to the children and families served by the McFarland center.

"Our Stratham center is mostly offices," she said. "The new facility at Pease will offer much more therapeutic space for the children."

Monroe said the new space's multi-purpose room will make a nice activity area for Great Bay's staff and kids. "It's an area we do not

have now that will serve as a gathering spot for informational sessions." Monroe said the real benefit of the building is that the all-inclusive center will better serve the needs of families, staff and children.

Tara Johnson
Portsmouth Herald

SeaCare Health Services celebrates Cover the Uninsured Week and launches new website!

March 22-28, 2009 marks "Cover the Uninsured Week" across the nation. This week is held to raise awareness of the problem for Americans who are unable to afford healthcare coverage. SeaCare Health Services assists people who are either uninsured or underinsured to get the healthcare they need.

To celebrate "Cover the Uninsured Week", SeaCare launched a new, improved website, www.SeaCareHealthServices.org. This site will help increase accessibility to the organization for healthcare providers, individuals and donors. A special thanks to Steve Casey and Rain Advertising for all of their help in redesigning the site, and to the Cogswell Benevolent Trust and the Agnes Lindsay Trust for their support.

Additional activities for Cover the Uninsured Week include a full-page Thank You Ad to recognize the over 400 health care providers who donate their services to the uninsured through SeaCare. The advertisement will be included in the Friday, March 27th issue of the Portsmouth Herald.

*Our newsletter is changing from a monthly to a quarterly publication.
Feel free to contact us with any questions or feedback.*

"See" you in June!

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