

Early Fall 2013 Youthlinks News

** Early Fall Session starts Sept. 16

Registration for after-school programs is recommended by Sept. 9

* Register for Middle School RASA clubs at RDMS online at: <http://youthlinksonline.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=53153d538d121692950932eba&id=19cf15f80a&e=5ce6cf3af2>

* Register for High School programs at Youthlinks online at <http://youthlinksonline.us6.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=53153d538d121692950932eba&id=9750334ea0&e=5ce6cf3af2>

SUMMER REVIEW!

School Garden Army

Tuesday, August 20th School Garden Army invited the community to celebrate the summer harvest at Youthlinks. They sold fresh veggies from their last farm stand of the season and gave tours of the Youthlinks/Oceanside East High School Garden to show off the fruits of their labor. The celebration included door prizes and contests to win free vegetables. View SGA's photo album on Facebook at <http://youthlinksonline.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=53153d538d121692950932eba&id=58bc03b7bd&e=5ce6cf3af2>

School Garden Army empowers youth to become leaders and responsible stewards of their environment using food as the mechanism of change. The program encourages land stewardship through sustainable local food production, improves public health through better nutrition and food security, and promotes community and economic development through investing in the next generation.

** Farm Camp at Headacre Farm

"Who likes vegetables here?" Chef Kerry Altiero of Café Miranda asks a group of campers from Youthlinks. "No one? Well let me tell you something, vegetables just need a little dressing up!" For the first four weeks of July campers entering grades six through eight were invited to Headacre Farm in Owls Head to learn about farming and cooking with Anne Perkins, Deb Donnelly and Kerry Altiero. At Headacre Farm, Anne, Deb and Kerry set out to prove to groups of middle school age campers that the world of organic, local farming is an exciting one with numerous health and environmental benefits.

Headacre Farm is a saltwater farm offering vegetables, herbs, fruits, flowers, and seasonal decorations. Headacre is committed to returning its 17 saltwater acres to sustainable, diversified, and organically certified farming and becoming a vibrant, productive, and responsible member of our local communities. Headacre Farm is operated in partnership with Café Miranda and provides the Rockland restaurant with fresh, organic produce throughout the growing season.

As part of their commitment to community, Anne and Deb approached Youthlinks over the winter about collaborating to create Farm Camp. Each week a group of twelve students would spend their mornings at Headacre

farm learning about plant families and organic pest management from Farmer Anne and helping to plant vegetables and weed and water garden beds. With Deb Donnelly campers also made their own barometers to measure atmospheric pressure, planted basil seeds and nasturtium flowers, and made terrariums with recycled bottles and materials found on the farm. Youthlinks' AmeriCorps members Josie Gates, Sarah Woodman and Kameryn Sanchez worked with campers to plant, maintain and harvest their own garden beds. They were able to monitor the progress of their own vegetables and make decisions about weeding and watering.

On Wednesdays, campers harvested vegetables from the farm and their garden plots to cook a veggie focused lunch with Chef Kerry. While the campers washed produce and chopped greens, Chef Kerry discussed the merits of eating green and eating local. He gave an example about the difference in taste between a tomato shipped from across the country and one grown in a local garden and he also described the global effects that a small, locally grown tomato can have. Because a tomato grown in a farm only a few miles away doesn't need to be shipped very far at all, it has a smaller carbon footprint than a tomato from across the country. In the afternoons campers left the farm but continued the outdoor theme and explored local areas such as Mt. Battie in Camden, Lucia Beach at Birch Point State Park, and Lakes Chickawaukee and Megunticook.

On the last day of camp, campers and their families were invited to a family field day at Headacre farm for games and a potluck style dinner. Families competed in tug-of-war and were given a tour of the farm by campers eager to show off the vegetables they took care of. Anne, Deb and Kerry Altiero all joined in the fun and were available to answer questions parents had about camp or organic and local farming practices. "We had an amazing summer," said Youthlinks' Program Director Amie Hutchison. "I am so grateful to Headacre Farm and Café Miranda for providing this opportunity to local students."

<http://youthlinksonline.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=53153d538d121692950932eba&id=ac8dc23c17&e=5ce6cf3af2>

** Rockland Community Sailing

Sailing is a fantastic way to have fun on the water! This summer Youthlinks students in grades five through twelve learned all the skills needed to sail a boat at Rockland Community Sailing's youth sailing camp. A program of the Apprenticeshop, the Rockland Community Sailing (RCS) and Youthlinks six year partnership began in 2008 as a fall and spring after-school program and soon evolved into two weeks of full day sailing camp. Fully funded by the Catawamteak Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, Youthlinks' and Rockland Community Sailing's collaboration is free of charge for 24 students.

Rockland Community Sailing camp is taught by five full time instructors: two head instructors: Robin and Devon, and three sailing instructors, Will, Aidan, and Cleo. All have sailed with RCS for years and worked their way up to become instructors. Lifejackets are provided.

Each day follows a similar pattern: morning lessons are spent introducing sailing skills to be practiced in the afternoons, whether that is tacking and jibing, identifying wind patterns and direction, points of sail, or self-rescue. Afternoons are spent in a hands-on manner, testing the skills students just learned in theory; students are taught by doing in sailing school. Swim tests and life jacket use are a standard part of the experience.

Students are first taught the basics of sailing: how to rig and de-rig a sailboat. Younger students and those with little experience sail one person Optimist prams, 8 feet long and rigged with a single sprit rigged sail. Older and

more experienced students are paired up to sail larger 420 sloops which have both a mainsail and a jib and are sailed by two students. On the first day of camp new students take turns being towed by a motorboat to learn the feel of being on a boat, and how to use a rudder to steer without the pressure of manipulating a sail. By the third day, students are able to tack and jibe, and practice self-rescue, meaning students intentionally capsize a boat and right it again in a rather swift motion (with life-vests on and instructors at hand.)

Throughout the week instructors teach lessons from small motorboats following sailors on the water to make sure that everyone is safe, yet allowing students the independence to learn on their own. Instructors also put buoys in the water to test student skills as they maneuver through courses set up as figure eights, ovals, and triangles. Thursday brought a fun day of capture the flag by sail, with Optis and 420s distributed throughout each team. Midweek the entire group divided into 420 crews and sailed to the lighthouse, with experienced students and instructors skippering boats.

Youthlinks program manager Sarah Woodman, who accompanied Youthlinks instructors Josie Gates and Kamryn Sanchez for the June week of sailing, expressed what a great experience it was to share the week with Rockland Community Sailing. "I was incredibly impressed with the skill and natural ease of all instructors. We had some students who were a little nervous to be out on their own, particularly the first day of sailing and the day we practiced self-rescue drills, and I was so happy with the balance instructors reached between encouraging the students to conquer their fears while also being there for them every step of the way. Students learned unbelievably fast and it was wonderful to see their confidence and skill grow, and to see how willing students were to help each other along the way."

The week had been planned to wrap up with a sailing exhibition for parents to observe, but weather refused to cooperate. Instead, students participated in a sailing Jeopardy led by instructors, displaying their new-found knowledge. Instructors handed out personalized awards for all students recognizing their work and progress over the week, and parents, instructors, and students all gathered for a potluck celebration. Rockland Community Sailing offers lessons all summer long for students who wish to learn to sail.

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RASA is a program of Youthlinks offered in collaboration with RSU 13 supported by a 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant from the Maine Department of Education. Youthlinks is a program of , a non-profit organization that has been serving the children and families of Waldo and Knox Counties since 1983. For more information concerning the Rockland After-School Alliance, please contact Youthlinks: 594-2221 or visit .

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