

SUMMER TIME NEWS



**BOYS & GIRLS
CLUB**

THE CLUB CHRONICLE

The Newsletter of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater
Vergennes- June 2020

CELEBRATING SUMMER IN EXCITING WAYS

Youth of the Year



A Message from the Board President- Jeff Fritz

It's hard to imagine that it's been nearly two- and one-half months since we were able to greet members in our clubhouse. An important part of our mission is to provide a safe place for the young people in our community. Since March 18, that safe place has been our homes.

Created from an immediate concern about how to continue to get food to members who rely on meals at the Club, grew our "Meals for All" program which has delivered more than 10,000 meals to anyone in our school district in need. I am very grateful to our staff and the army of volunteers who continue coordinate 300 daily meals.

We are also humbled by the generous donations, large and small, toward our effort to fight food insecurity. We were also recognized by Boys & Girls Clubs of America and received a grant of \$11,500 from Panda Cares to continue our program. We anticipate the need for meals to deepen as the summer progresses, and will continue our deliveries for as long as is practical.

In early May of this year, the Board of Directors made the difficult decision to "shutter" our building for the summer and to provide remote/virtual programming to our members in lieu of traditional summer programs. Our inventive staff has been working closing with our national programming directors and have made it happen. (Continued on page 2)

When Michael Davis first walked into the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes in eighth grade he said he knew three things. First, he wasn't sure what the club was about. Second, he wasn't sure how much school was going to be a focus in his life and third he probably wasn't going to come back again. Fast forward four years and Michael Davis has a very different look and understanding of what is possible if you are willing to step outside your comfort zone. "I first came to meet people and to hang out," shared the 2020 Youth of the Year. "Since I was very good working with my hands, people quickly saw that and encouraged me to help out with building things, fixing things and participating in contests where engineering and problem solving were required. I liked being there and even more so, I liked being able to work with younger club members on projects and see them learn new things. Quickly I found great friends and found mentor in the staff and volunteers there. One volunteer took it upon herself to involve me in many different community service projects with local civic organizations. I started out serving meals and quickly found a second and third home working with others. I realized that even young people could make a lasting difference and I made the decision to help. (cont)

THE CLUB CHRONICLE- JUNE 2020

FOOD FOR ALL PROGRAM CONTINUES TO HELP IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Moving forward together

Meals for All is available without question or documentation of need to any local resident of Vergennes, Waltham, Panton, Ferrisburgh, North Ferrisburgh or Addison

Registration is available on the bgcvergennes.org website.
Our work is funded through donations.

The menu is posted weekly and food can be dropped off or picked up at the club. At present, this program will continue until at least the end of July.

In this time of challenges, it is important to reach out to each other and with support and programming that matches the community needs. Boys & Girls Club of Vergennes is aware of the challenges facing families in regards to safety and food insecurity. It is our goal to support both individuals and families through the Meals for All Program so that one less worry is on your plate as we navigate uncharted territory. We would like to thank the donors both large and small who continue to fund our purchase of food and our wonderful volunteers who package and drive the food five days a week.

Message from Board President Jeff Fritz continued

With our sincere gratitude, we wish Jill Strube the very best in her next adventure. Jill's leadership and tenacity made our transition into a permanent home a reality and her commitment to the Club's mission was the force behind our tremendous growth in membership. Thank you for all you have done for our Club, Jill.

Great things will always happen at Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes! Our community garden is underway, we are fighting food insecurity in our community, and we're reaching out to new and current members as we adapt to our new reality. We sincerely hope we will be able to open our doors to our community with the new school year. We are deeply grateful for your continued support of our mission. Please, if you can, visit our website at www.bgcvergennes.org and make a contribution. Thank you for believing in what we do.

NEW WEBSITE TO LAUNCH ON MAY 29th with SUMMER VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING SHOWCASED

The Boys & Girls Club is excited to share the launch of a new interactive website on May 29th and the summer virtual programs for both youth and teens. With topics including Animal Week, Flight, Under the Sea, Virtual Escape Rooms, Artistic Adventures and more. There will be something for everyone. You will have daily projects and will become immersed in places and people of the area. Some you may know and some will be new to you! Check it all out at bgcvergennes.org starting on May 29th.

THE CLUB CHRONICLE- JUNE 2020

YOUTH OF THE YEAR CONTINUED

Since that day five years ago, Michael has become a part of his school community and a leader in community service for his age. Michael spends over 600 hours a year volunteering with American Legion Post # 14 and is a part of planning and executing fundraisers, celebrations, and works also as a part of the kitchen crew on events of all sizes.

Accepted to the Professional Pilot Program at Vermont Technical College in the fall, Michael plans on getting not only his commercial pilot's license, but his Airframe & Powerplant License so he can repair jet engines as well.

"I can honestly say that the Boys & Girls Club changed my life," shared Michael. "It helped me see possibilities and helped me grow in ways that pushed me to learn something new every day and to be a part of my community on many levels. My years at the club helped me grow."



Meet Jimmy Spillman- June Club Member of the Month



Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes is proud to announce the start of a program honoring a member of the club each month for going above and beyond in their school, home or community. Our first member of the month is Jim Spillman, a freshman at VUHS. While school isn't out yet, Jim has already put his summer plans in motion and has a job at Shaw's. "I started working at what was the very beginning of the pandemic," shared Jimmy. "It was at first all about saving up money for a family trip to Florida, but I stayed on. It's good to work and people need a place to buy their food. Sometimes it is stressful, but it is essential.

Jimmy remembers his first day at the Boys & Girls Club and said it was the day that fourth grade ended. It was the first day I qualified to be able to go and I had heard about it from my sister Horizon who was a year older. I remember coming and meeting Curtis, Ian and other staff who were friendly and welcoming. With a grin, Jimmy shares memories of marshmallows fights, Friday night group gatherings and food that he still loves to this day. One favorite is Chicken Tater Tots and shared that whatever Lisa cooks is wonderful.

Interested in music, games, biking and books of all kinds, Jimmy looks to the club as a place to read, relax, game, and explore different possibilities. "I'm looking forward to the virtual summer offerings, especially the virtual escape room, shared Jimmy.

Tilling the Land- Boys & Girls Club Offers a Community Victory Garden Spot

The first supermarket supposedly appeared on the American landscape in 1946. That is not very long ago. Until then, where was all the food? Dear folks, the food was in homes, gardens, local fields, and forests. It was near kitchens, near tables, near bedsides. It was in the pantry, the cellar, the backyard. – Joel Salatin

Boys & Girls Club has land ready for planting and is looking for people who want to give gardening a try or share with others how it is done. A Community Garden is available from June 1st to Harvest Time and can be signed up for at no cost by reaching out to cookie@bgcvergenes.com or filling out the form on the bgcvergenes.org. Local Master Gardeners will be available several hours a week to assist. There is plenty of room, hay for weed control, some tools and a hose with water. Come and plant some seeds and enjoy the bounty of summer fresh vegetables in Vermont.

Meet the Summer Programming Staff

Lisa Davis- Programing Manger

Steven Maluenda – Teen Program Specialist – AmeriCorps VYDC

Jason Clark- Program Assistant

Alyse Beauchemin- Program Assistant

Mason Wood- Program Assistant

Grace Smart- Program Assistant

Youth of the Month continued

When asked to think about what programming he would like to see at the club, Jimmy was intrigued with people teaching musical instruments including base, guitar or drums. He also wanted to meet people who had different careers or jobs that people might be interested in learning more about. The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes is delighted to recognize Jimmy Spillman as its first Youth of the Month and presented him with a \$ 25.00 Amazon gift card. Program Coordinator Lisa Davis remarked, “Jimmy is always a positive person here at the club. He is willing to help others; he works hard and he also enjoys solo time when reading and relaxing. We are very proud to work with him and have him as a member.”