



ACT Happenings

Take Home and Share with Your Family!

Fall 2009

www.abingtonact.org for expanded information

YMCA Holds 7th Annual Thanksgiving Day Gobble Wobble

Where will you be Thanksgiving morning? Each year, a growing number of Abington folks are participating in the Abington YMCA Gobble Wobble. Now in its 7th year, this celebration of fun and fitness “before the feast” has become a local tradition that features a 5K Run and 2-Mile Walk.

The gun sounds the start at 9:00 a.m. on November 26 for this family event that welcomes all ages and abilities. New this year is automated chip timing to provide faster results. The Run course is

USATF certified and winds through a beautiful Abington neighborhood, finishing with an Olympic-style lap around the track at Memorial Field. The 2-mile walk is non-competitive and open to all ages. A DJ, free raffle and refreshments, complete the day.

There are overall and age-group awards as well as special prizes. For information and registration, visit www.philaymca.org/Abington or call 215-884-9622.

Chess Opportunities for All Ages

On Fridays, from 3:30-5:00 p.m., Abington Free Library is hosting drop-in **Teen Chess**. Beginning October 9 and running through May 2010, students in grades 6-12 can learn how to play chess, improve skills, or just enjoy the game by pairing and playing with others at the same ability level. Lessons will be given from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. for those who want to learn chess or better their game. Adults from the community are welcome to come play chess with the teens. This program is free; however, those who are interested should register at the Information Desk, call 215-885-5180 ext. 13, or email Ljones@mclinc.org.

Another chess opportunity will be offered on Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m., beginning January 14 at Ardsley Community Center. Children ages 4-14 can join the **Silver Knights Chess Club** and learn to play chess. Class time is divided between lessons (from rules to advanced tournament strategies) and games in which students play opponents of similar skill levels. Interestingly, students of this program have competed in local, state, and national tournaments, placing as high as 10th in the nation. The fee for this course is \$100 for Abington Township residents. For registration and information, contact Abington Bureau of Parks and Recreation: 215-576-5213.

Government for Teens

A new **Youth and Government** program, sponsored by the YMCA, brings to life the workings of state government for 7th through 12th graders. Teens who are drawn to current affairs and government are given the opportunity to discuss current state issues with state administrators, elected officials, and students from 40 area high schools and YMCA's throughout Pennsylvania.

(Continued on page 4)

Improve Memory and Study Skills

Learning how to retain and recall information can present a huge hurdle to many students. In **Learn to Study Effectively: Stop Wasting Time**, Dr. Edward Crapps, Ph.D., and author of a book on study strategies, will present visualization, association, listening, writing, and verbal exercises to aid the learning process. This free workshop geared to boys and girls in grades 6-12 will be held at the Abington Free Library, 1030 Old York Road, on Saturday, October 24, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Dr. Crapps will also cover thinking critically about reading material, taking personal responsibility for one's personal development and career goals, and earning better SAT scores. To register, call 215-885-5180 ext. 13 or email Ljones@mclinc.org.

Fall Workshops Address Relevant Parenting Issues

The Center for Parenting Education offers an active fall calendar of workshops, discussion groups, and parent-child activities, and its website includes a resource library of helpful parenting articles. For information and registration for all Center options, call 215-657-5720 or visit www.CenterforParentingEducation.org. Here are some of the highlighted workshops available over the next two months.

It's never too early to consider how to answer questions and decrease the discomfort that may be present when children ask questions about sex and sexuality. Parents of children of all ages can explore ways to have age-appropriate dialogues with their sons and daughters in the workshop **Someone Is Going To Do It; Why Not You?** on Tuesday, October 13, 7:00-9:00 p.m., at the Giant Super Food Store Community Center, 315 York Road, Willow Grove

Another area where parents seek helpful input involves raising a happy, healthy daughter in a challenging world. **Raising Strong, Confident Daughters** will help prepare parents to aid their daughters in navigating some of the confusing or even harmful messages girls are hearing from soci-

ety, the media, and their peers. This workshop meets Saturday, October 24, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, also at the Giant Community Center.

Responsibility is an area where parents can encounter frustrations in raising children. **How Many Times Do I Have to Tell You?** helps parents promote responsibility in their children by teaching specific approaches for developing a healthy sense of responsibility for self and others.

As the holidays approach, parents begin to have concerns about over indulging their children **From Gimmie to Grateful**, held on Wednesday, December 2, 7:00-9:00 p.m., at the Giant Community Center, will focus on how parents can shift children from a sense of entitlement to one of gratitude and personal responsibility.

For parents who find it difficult to leave their home to attend workshops, the Center offers online opportunities. **Setting the Stage for Discipline that Works** invites parents into a virtual meeting room on Wednesday, October 21, 9:00-10:30 p.m., to learn which parenting styles are most apt to enhance their chances of shaping their children's behavior for social and personal success.

From Becoming a Well-Trained Babysitter to Becoming A Sibling

A well-trained, well-informed babysitter is invaluable. There are two opportunities for young people to learn important information.

The **Babysitting Workshop** for boys and girls ages 11 and up is a six-hour program that teaches young people to become more qualified babysitters. The course covers basic childcare, age-appropriate activities, and how to handle family routines and emergencies. Presented by Child, Home & Community, Inc. for Abington Memorial Hospital, this course will be offered Saturday, October 10 and again December 5 at Abington Memorial Hospital. The cost is \$50, and pre-registration is required. For information and registration, call 215-348-9770.

Another **Babysitting Workshop** for 11-15-year-olds provides Red Cross certification and runs Saturday, November 21, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Ardsley Community Center. The fee is \$55 for Abington residents and covers such topics as First Aid, creative play, resumé development, and pro-

fessionalism. For more information and registration, call Abington Bureau of Parks and Recreation at 215-576-5312.

Safe Sitter is offered by Holy Redeemer Health System through its Childcare Center on the third Saturday and Sunday of every other month. Boys and girls ages 11-13 learn about child development, age-appropriate activities, and basic life-saving skills when caring for younger children. The cost is \$40. To register for the November 21 & 22 session, call 1-800-818-4747.

Holy Redeemer also offers a **Sibling To Be** course for children ages 3-7. This 90-minute program helps siblings prepare for their role as big brother or big sister as they learn about newborns and talk about feelings. They also visit the nursery and have a celebration party. The cost is \$20. The next sessions will be held Saturday, 10:00-11:30 a.m., October 17 and Friday, 6:30-8:00 p.m., November 20. To register, call 1-800-818-4747.

Basketball for All Seasons

Boys and girls ages 8-14 who want to learn and play basketball can play in the James Fox Elementary School League for 3rd-6th graders or the Junior High League for 7th-8th graders. Practice and games take place at Abington Junior High School with games scheduled between 6:00 and 10:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays (possibly more than one game each week). The cost is \$65. Register with Abington Bureau of Parks & Recreation at 215-576-5213.

Abington PAL Fall/Winter Activities

A haunted hayride, cooking classes, bowling, dances, snow tubing at Blue Mountain, and 3-on-3 basketball tournaments. These are some of the activities offered by the Abington Police Athletic League (PAL) this fall and early winter. Those age 11 through grade 12 who are looking for fun weekend activities are welcomed at Abington PAL on Fridays and Saturdays, 7:00-11:00 p.m. at the Glenside Weldon School, 409 N. Easton Road, Glenside. All programs and activities are provided free so that no child is left out due to inability to pay. The PAL site also features air hockey, pool, foosball, arcade basketball, and video games. Coming soon is the Wii game "Guitar Hero." For more information, visit www.abingtonpal.org or call 267-536-1072.

Winter Recreation Programs

When the weather is not conducive to outdoor sports, children ages 6-13 can take advantage of two sports offered through the Winter Recreation Program of Abington Bureau of Parks and Recreation. Running on Friday nights, January 8 through March 12, 2010, this program will feature basketball at McKinley Elementary School and Floor Hockey at Ardsley Community Center. The one-hour slots begin at 6:00 for age 6, 7:00 for age 7, 8:00 for ages 8 and 9, and 9:00 for ages 10-13. Registration at the Bureau begins Monday, October 12 and will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost is \$35 for Abington Township residents, \$55 for non-residents. For information, call 215-576-5312.

Teen & Tween Nights at YMCA

Looking for something to do on Friday nights? Check out the Abington YMCA, 1073 Old York Road, Abington. Those in grades 7-12 can play **5-on-5 Basketball** from 8:00-10:00 p.m. every Friday. This same age group is also welcomed at **Teen Nights**, the first Friday of every month. Offerings include basketball, swimming (7:00-8:00 p.m.), racquetball (YMCA supplies equipment), foosball, double dutch, and more. Similarly, **Tween Night** for boys and girls in grades 4-6 runs the third Friday of each month and includes swimming, gymnastics, organized games, basketball, hockey, arts and crafts, and periodic splash parties and dances. For these three opportunities, the admission is free to Abington YMCA members and only \$5 for non-members.

Gingerbread Crafts

Boys and girls ages 7-12 can try their creative hand at decorating a gingerbread house on Friday, December 4 at the Ardsley Community Center, 6:00-7:30 p.m. A fee of \$20 will provide each child with a pre-made gingerbread house and decorating materials.

That same evening, children ages 4-6 may bring their parents to enjoy together an hour of gingerbread cookie decorating from 6:00-7:00 p.m. For a fee of \$10, children will first personalize an apron to wear, then decorate cookies.

For both events, space is limited to 25. The registration deadline is November 20 with Abington Bureau of Parks and Recreation: 215-576-5213.

Doggone Good Readers

Children in grades 1-5, who enjoy reading and/or need to improve their reading skills can do so in a relaxed atmosphere by reading to certified therapy dogs in Abington Library's Doggone Good Reader program. The next two sessions are scheduled for November 7 and December 5 in the Library's Community Room, 10:15-10:45 a.m. or 11:00-11:30 a.m. Register in the Children's Department or call 215-884-5180 ext. 28.

**Use Abington Police Anonymous Tip Line 1-877-APD-TIPS to report safety concerns.
Always call 9-1-1 for emergencies.**

Explore Nature through Briar Bush Programs, No School Cool

Children love to explore nature, and Abington has just the place for them. Briar Bush Nature Center, located at 1212 Edge Hill Road, runs programs and activities throughout the year for every age and stage.

Two- and three-year-olds and adults can discover nature together through stories, crafts, games, trail hikes, and live animal encounters during **Magic Mornings** offered certain Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 10:30-11:30. Four- and five-year-olds can participate in a month-long **Preschool Pioneers** series that features hands-on activities, nature hikes, crafts, and stories. This series meets from 1:00-2:00 p.m. on four Tuesdays each month. The next series begins October 3 and November 6.

The **Junior Birders Club** is open to children in all grades, who enjoy watching their feathered friends. Participants will take advantage of Briar Bush's trails and Bird Observatory. They must be able to read and should bring binoculars

and a field guide if possible. This group meets monthly at 3:45 p.m.: October 15, November 19 (includes field trip), and December 17.

Children in 1st-3rd grades can take advantage of **No School Cool**. This program runs on those days when school is closed but work for parents is not! Children take field trips and have time to explore Briar Bush Nature Center. From 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Upcoming dates and themes are: November 3 – That's Creepy, and December 28-31 – Winter in the Woods.

Briar Bush also welcomes scout groups who want to work on nature badges. Scout leaders can call for a list of badge-related activities. Briar Bush also welcomes Eagle Scout projects.

Red Cross Life Guarding Certification

Life guarding and CPR/First Aid certification is an excellent way for teens to obtain and keep jobs both at indoor pools in the winter and at outdoor pools during the summer. The Abington YMCA offers certification sessions throughout the year for boys and girls 15 years or older. Prospective guards must be able to complete a standard swim test on the first day of this course, including a 300-yard swim using the front crawl, breast, and back strokes, and dive to the bottom of the pool (12 feet) to retrieve a weighted brick.

The next two sessions run on selected dates from October 23-November 7 and November 9-December 7. The cost is \$225 for Abington YMCA Full Privilege members and \$275 for Program and non-members. This fee covers American Red Cross life guarding certification, a First Aid and Professional CPR American Red Cross life guarding textbook, and a CPR mask.

Those requiring recertification are offered sessions on November 7 or December 2 and 7. Their cost of \$75 and \$100, respectively. Register for either course at the Abington YMCA, 1073 Old York Road, Abington, 215-884-9622.

Teen Opportunity To Effect Laws

(Continued from page 1)

Students can go on to have opportunities to provide input and have a real impact on legislation by writing their own bills based on what they feel the needs are in their community. They then argue for their bills on the Senate floor if they become delegates to a three-day final event held in April at the Capitol in Harrisburg. Interestingly, more than 700 Pennsylvania laws have come from this program.

This group will meet Wednesdays, 3:3-5:00 p.m. at the Abington YMCA, beginning October 7th (late registrations accepted). This is a \$460 program that is being offered for \$50. Discussions should be especially exciting in view of upcoming elections as there will be opportunities to work with local officials on their campaigns. For more information, contact Abington YMCA Teen Director Angela Jacovini at 215-884-9622 ext 1856.

The Abington Community Taskforce (ACT) is a coalition of diverse organizations working together to enhance the effectiveness of programs and services for youth and their families in order to ensure a safe and caring community. ACT's core values are caring, collaboration, community, integrity, proactive protection and intervention, and respect. ACT welcomes reader input. Visit ACT online at www.abingtonact.org and click "Contact Us," or call 215-517-2720. ACT would like to express appreciation to Abington Memorial Hospital for its assistance in printing this publication.

Editor: Rosemary Peters Hinkle