

Community health depends on community voices

North Port CHAT Meeting Summary
February 10th, 2010 4:30 pm

Present: Jennifer Grant; Linda Stone, Brenda Szuch, Ken Alexander, Terry Lewis, Hector Mendez, Sam George, Fay Williams, Janis Russell, Tom Jones, Hilary Woodcum, Tom Davie, Stephania Feltz, Monica Becket, Kimalee Rowley, Lou Galterio, Vince Guiffre, Todd Konen, David Carter, Diane Ramseyer

Welcome and Introductions – Fay Williams, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were provided.

January meeting summary was reviewed and approved.

Stephania Feltz, Girls Inc., presented the CHAT with information on the activities of this organization. They are part of a national organization that is throughout the US and Canada, which was formally known as the Girls Club. The Sarasota Girls Inc, just won the distinction of being the Top Girls, Inc in the United States. They provide afterschool and summer programs. They also provide outreach to communities such as North Port. These outreach programs are *Girl Circles*, *Girls on the Run*, and *ETS (Educational Talent Search-* assistance in pursuing college education), and a list of programs offered throughout all Girls, Inc organization. Additional programs are provided at their main Sarasota Location. Their outreach in the North Port area is at Gene Matthews Boys and Girls Club, Atwater Elementary, Cranberry Elementary, and Glenallen Elementary - they offer Operation Smart. At the George Mullen Activity Center they offer Media Literacy. Girl Circles are held at Woodland Middle School, and ETS and Project Bold at the High School. They serve ages 5-18 (5-14 at the Sarasota Center). She estimates that through the schools and other locations, they serve about 600 North Port girls.

Stephania indicated that they are very interested in bringing *Micro Society* to the area. She explained this program operates like a micro community, with girls taking on specific roles, and learn skills which apply to everyday adult life. Ken Alexander shared his experience visiting with the organization and encouraged everyone to take the opportunity to observe any of the programs. Janis Russell asked how they deal with the transportation issue. In North Port they are in the schools, so that avoids a transportation problem. At the Mullen Center, it is a summer camp offering with parent providing transportation. The Micro Society program runs throughout the school year. Girls can participate from age 5 through 14, and can do so throughout all the school years. It takes about 3 months to get set up, and they are looking for funding. The costs involve include a coordinator and approximately \$20/child – estimate is \$100,000 (*corrected to \$150,000 after the meeting*) to bring to North Port. CHAT members indicated an interest in exploring how to help bring it to North Port.

Updates –

Health Services Committee – Sam presented the update from the Health Services Committee. At the last meeting, two representatives from Venice Regional asked what types of health service needs

Our Mission: Through the efforts and activities of the North Port CHAT, we will achieve a safe, healthy community where individuals and agencies collaborate to assure the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all residents. We will accomplish this through advocacy for an integrated health and behavioral health care system, evoking community action and collaboration to reduce substance abuse among our youth and adults, promoting the value of “connectivity” in all aspects of the development and growth of our community, and most importantly, providing an effective way for the voice of the community to be heard and active in North Port.

exist in North Port which Venice Regional might be able to address. The issue of pediatrics was noted.

The committee is working on the Physician Meeting which is now scheduled for April 1st. This meeting, at Heron Creek Country Club, will include a presentation on Pulmonary Care (for a CME) and will also seek responses from the physicians on their awareness of tobacco cessation services. This will be used as part of the CHAT's community tobacco assessment.

The group also is working on a program on Asthma for parents. They will be able to provide this to clients at the North Port Clinic and are exploring at least one school. A retired physician has offered to provide the information, and will also include information and supplies from the American Lung Association. In conjunction with the outreach to the elementary schools, they will make an offer to connect the school to the "Tooth Fairy" dental health program (offered free through the health department dental division).

Linda Stone asked for the group to keep in mind that there is a large need for specialty physicians who are willing to help provide some volunteer services to clients needing services beyond primary care. In the past, retired physicians have often provided these services, but in the current economic times, they are now returning to work and no longer have the volunteer time available. Sam agreed that we need more specialists, even in private practice, as well as for the voluntary services to which Linda was referencing. David Carter indicated that the SMH ER has signed, or is in process of signing contracts with a variety of specialists. It may be that as they build their practice, they will be able to provide some volunteer services.

NP-ASAP Update - Monica Becket shared an update on the work NP-ASAP is doing. The SWAT is moving forward on the Tobacco Grant Project.

April 14th is the date of the Youth Summit – 5:30 – 8:30. This will be the vehicle to introduce the North Port D-FY program (Drug Free Youth). The youth leadership group is in place, and has already been talking with the school clubs and others. Monica asked for assistance in obtaining food and some raffle prizes for the Summit. The group voted to cancel the April 14th CHAT, for the membership to help with this event. The date was set because of FCAT and Spring Break – and the fact that on April 21st, we have the opportunity to begin the membership drive (with drug testing provide by First Step as part of its partnership on NP D-FY). The location is being confirmed.

This is the time for the Drug-Free Communities Grant. The grant is being prepared and the idea of working with a local partner is being explored. A final application will be completed by the next CHAT meeting for approval. Monica reminded the group that the strategies and plan for this grant was discussed and approved in February 2009, but we have lacked the means to carry out the strategies in full.

Community Pharmacy of Sarasota – Services are now provided in the Family Services Center on the first and third Tuesday of the month in the CHAT office. Please help get the word out to families and individuals who may benefit from this service.

Our Mission: Through the efforts and activities of the North Port CHAT, we will achieve a safe, healthy community where individuals and agencies collaborate to assure the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all residents. We will accomplish this through advocacy for an integrated health and behavioral health care system, evoking community action and collaboration to reduce substance abuse among our youth and adults, promoting the value of "connectivity" in all aspects of the development and growth of our community, and most importantly, providing an effective way for the voice of the community to be heard and active in North Port.

North Port Health Clinic – Currently operating out of the Family Services Center while renovations are being done across the street. Linda Stone provided an update on the services and the expansion planned. This includes bringing Obstetrics to the facility. While they serve persons who have little or no insurance, they can also provide services covered through several insurance companies. Linda also shared information on the Sarasota Healthcare Access program which provides case management services for persons with chronic disease and do not have insurance or adequate insurance. At the Clinic, Todd Konen offers case management services which include referral to substance abuse and mental health services.

North Port ER – David Carter reported that the walls are up on the second floor of the ER building. They are working on the physician services to fill the units. They continue to employ approximately 75 persons.

Community Announcements

Early Bird Kiwanis is working with Café Gelato next week to serve a special dish of linguine (all you can eat for \$6.99) to support Relay for Life.

Janis Russell shared some caregiving programs being offered monthly at the Library. There will also be a program on resources for improving hearing, or supports for hearing impaired.

Kimalee Rowley shared information on Tidewell Hospice. She works to build awareness in the community as to the services offered by Tidewell – she can come to groups to speak and share information.

Jenn-Marie shared that May 8th is the Salvation Army Food Drive – in cooperation with the Post Office – you leave the donated food at your mailbox. They are looking for volunteers to help with the event. Local food pantries can help and receive donations, call Margie at 240-5108. All donations will stay in the North Port Community.

Meeting Dates to Remember

February 11th, 6:30 pm - NP-ASAP – North Port Family Services Ctr.

February 25th, 6:30 pm - NP-ASAP – North Port Family Services Ctr.

March 3rd, 4:30 pm – Health Services Com – NEW LOCATION! -North Port Family Services Center 6919 Outreach Way (corner of Pan American and Outreach)

March 10th 4:30 pm - Next CHAT– North Port Police Department

APRIL 14th – D-FY YOUTH SUMMIT 5:30 pm

Our Mission: Through the efforts and activities of the North Port CHAT, we will achieve a safe, healthy community where individuals and agencies collaborate to assure the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all residents. We will accomplish this through advocacy for an integrated health and behavioral health care system, evoking community action and collaboration to reduce substance abuse among our youth and adults, promoting the value of “connectivity” in all aspects of the development and growth of our community, and most importantly, providing an effective way for the voice of the community to be heard and active in North Port.