

SICM NEWS

Year 44, Number 1, Winter 2012

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Healthy Homes/Healthy People Concludes Successful Program

Schenectady Inner City Ministry has completed a three-year Environmental Justice project. A grant proposal was submitted to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Office of Environmental Justice in April, 2008. Grant approval was received in October 2008. The grant was for \$50,000 for education in the inner city about proper handling and disposal of household hazardous waste. In 2009 the working committee planned, prepared public education materials, hired an outreach worker from the inner city community, and started the public outreach campaign. We had one collection day in October 2010 and another in June 2011, both at the SICM Food Pantry parking lot, centrally located and easily accessible to the population we were serving.

(see "Healthy Homes on page 3)

SICM Community Service Award Recognizes Key Volunteers

In December, SICM held its annual Holiday Potluck Dinner in conjunction with the December Assembly Meeting. Held at Niskayuna Reformed Church, it was a festive evening, complete with a wide variety of home-cooked food, award presentations, and entertainment consisting of storytellers.

(see "Award Winners on p. 3)



Ellie Rowland receives her award from Rev. Phil Grigsby, while Crys Hamelink looks on.

*****SAVE THE DATE***SAVE THE DATE***SAVE THE DATE*****

SICM Day of Service Saturday, April 21, 2012

SICM is planning another volunteer day on Saturday morning, April 21, and we hope you and members from your congregation or group would like to help that day. Last year over 160 volunteers came from various SICM member churches and from 3 colleges to work at various SICM sites. The number of volunteers from various churches

ranged from 2 to 19, and the ages ranged from 3 years old to mid-80's. We are seeking requests for work projects, which volunteers could complete within 3 hours.

Look for more details coming soon, and contact Janet Mattis at 374-2683 or jmattis@sicm.us if you have questions or want to sign up.



Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 58 member congregations "relating the resources of the congregations to the human needs of the city," which means ministries of social service, education, witness and social action. The SICM newsletter and more detailed financial and program information is available from SICM at 1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12308 or (518) 374-2683. FAX: (518) 382-1871.

Email address: information@sicm.us.

Website address is: www.sicm.us.

SICM's finances are audited annually by an independent auditing firm.

Ministry Notes



A Little How SICM Works

God is Good!
Sometimes people ask me how SICM gets involved in things that we do. A recent effort "Healthy Homes, Healthy People" is illustrative of how SICM gets involved in new areas. This effort wrapped up this fall, but it is a good story.

A little over three years ago, Nancy Peterson, an active member of the First Unitarian Society (FUSS), gave me a call about an environmental justice grant. Nancy chairs the Green Sanctuary committee of FUSS and has been an active environmental/recycling advocate for a number of years. She was wondering if SICM had thought about applying for this DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) grant. Her congregation was interested but a sponsor needed to be broader than one congregation.

I replied that no, we had not heard of it. We of course support recycling but had not been involved any further. Nancy was concerned that city and inner city resi-

dents were not fully utilizing the county's household hazardous waste center because it is in Glenville at the county farm. The county has sponsored a monthly collection in Glenville.

For those who may not be familiar, "household hazardous waste" is the stuff we can all buy but should not throw away in the trash – oil based paints, garden chemicals, household cleaners, things like Drano, etc. They poison the landfills (fyi latex paint does not, and can be readily disposed of by drying out or filling the can with cat litter and then disposing of in the trash). It also includes electronics and computers, but fortunately now there are places for that – the GE Elfun computer project, Goodwill, the county's program, Best Buy, etc.

When we talked with Nancy it did seem like a grant that we could work with. The idea was to undertake first some education in the city on the need to dispose of this waste properly, and then to conduct pilot inner city collections. Since the grant had a three year time period, there was time for an educational outreach effort and then collections.

Nancy agreed to not only help with the grant but to serve as the volunteer coordinator. We hired a part time outreach worker; this is how we met Allison Williams who began this year as Summer Lunch Coordinator. She developed a DVD to use in outreach efforts. All of us worked to develop a project committee to guide the project and outreach. Allison also coordinated a poster contest effort with the Hamilton Hill Arts Center and Girls Inc.

After a year+ of outreach we felt we were ready to conduct a collection. With the guidance of Jeff Edwards of the county, we developed a plan for the collection, got site approval, selected the contractor, and set to work. The first one was in October 2010 and less successful than we hoped. The site was the SICM Food Pantry on Albany Street. *(continued on back page)*

SCHENECTADY INNER CITY MINISTRY

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Executive Director: Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby

Editor: Janet Mattis

The Assembly of SICM includes one clergy and two lay delegates from all member congregations: Albany Street United Methodist, Alplaus United Methodist, Altamont Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Bethel AME, Burnt Hills United Methodist, Carman United Methodist, Christ Church Episcopal, Church of St. Adalbert, Duryee Memorial AME Zion, Eastern Parkway United Methodist, Emmanuel Baptist—Friedens UCC, Faith United Methodist, First Baptist, Sch'dy, First Baptist, Scotia, First Reformed, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Scotia, First Unitarian Society, First United Methodist, Friendship Baptist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Grace Lutheran, Grace Temple Church of God in Christ, Immaculate Conception, Sch'dy, Immanuel Lutheran, Koinonia Christian Ministries, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mount Olivet Missionary Baptist, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Refreshing Spring Church of God in Christ, Rotterdam United Methodist, St. Anthony's, St. George's Episcopal, St. Helen's, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joseph's, Sch'dy, St. Joseph's, Scotia, St. Luke's, St. Paul the Apostle, St. Paul's Episcopal, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Scotia United Methodist, Society of Friends (Quakers), Stanford United Methodist, State Street Presbyterian, Tabernacle Baptist, Trinity Presbyterian, Union Presbyterian, Woodlawn Reformed, Zion Lutheran.

Award Winners *(cont'd from p. 1)*

At this meeting, SICM honored some special volunteers with its Community Service Award: Ellie Rowland, Nancy Peterson, Westoria Poole, and Gene Woodard. The award is intended to honor a volunteer or volunteer group within the SICM ministries network that go “above and beyond.”

Ellie is nominated for the SICM Community Service Award for her excellent contributions overall as a SICM delegate from Union Presbyterian Church, and for her outstanding volunteer service with the Emergency Food Pantry, the Summer Lunch Program, and her help with the SICM Steering Committee.



Rev. Phil and Nancy

Nancy began serving as a SICM delegate representing First Unitarian Society of Schenectady in 2007. She also serves as the chair of FUSS’ Green Sanctuary and on the Schenectady County Recycling Committee. Nancy was instrumental in educating Schenectady residents about household hazardous waste, and provided an opportunity for them to drop off their household hazards free of charge.

Westoria Poole of Niskayuna, was nominated for the SICM Community Service Award for her outstanding efforts with the SICM Summer Lunch program at Friendship House over the years. For the past decade or longer, Westoria has served as the lead volunteer coordinator of



Westoria Poole

this site. She recruits and trains volunteers from her congregation (Friendship Baptist) and others, and helps SICM provide free healthy meals to hungry kids from the Hamilton Hill, Vale and Central State Street areas of Schenectady.

Gene is a volunteer for the SICM Food Pantry, who goes “above and beyond” in helping those in need in the community. He is nominated for his outstanding efforts with the Food Pantry over the past 5 years, picking up baked goods at Hannaford and BJ’s, and delivering to the Pantry. Gene has also worked every mass distribution day since the program’s inception a few years ago at the Pantry.



Rev. Phil presents award to Gene

Healthy Homes *(continued from page 1)*

After the meager household hazardous waste collection we did in October 2010, our June 25, 2011 collection was successful beyond our wildest dreams. About 60 people had pre-registered, almost double the number in 2010. People who pre-registered were assigned to come at 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, and 1:00, about a quarter of the total at each hour. By 9:45 there were over twenty cars already lined up.

When we started checking the registrations, we found far more unregistered than pre-registered. Although we had an incentive program to encourage pre-registration (a \$10 gift certificate to Target), most people were there not for the gift certificate, but because they wanted to get rid of many years’ accumulation of household hazardous waste. By noon the truck was almost filled to capacity. At that point we decided to turn away unregistered people so that those who were assigned to come at 1:00 wouldn’t be justifiably irate. Of course many unregistered were irate, because pre-registration was not required.

Although the County has a monthly collection at Hetcheltown Road, many people hadn’t heard about it. There is obviously quite a need for this service. We hope our three-year grant program has served as a pilot for the city or county to follow up at various locations, convenient to various populations within our local area. Jeff Edwards, County Solid Waste Planner, said he is interested in continuing to hold a collection day at the SICM Food Pantry parking lot once each year.



4th Annual Harvest for the Pantry Continues Tradition of Raising Funds for the Emergency Food Pantry!



On Sunday, November 6, 2011, SICM friends and supporters gathered once again to share a meal to support the Emergency Food Pantry. Almost 200 people took part in the dinner, the silent auction and the pick-a-prize. Chef Nicky once again shared her culinary talents by providing a tasty chicken marsala entrée as well as a vegetarian ziti option, and local restaurants contributed salad, sundaes, and hot drinks. Clara Lasselle once again donated her time and talent with her Harvest for the Pantry cakes for dessert. Many local businesses and individuals donated goods and services for the auctions. This year the Silent Auction was held in the front of Fellowship Hall, allowing bidders to keep a close eye on their bids! Bidding took place throughout the evening for the many items and combined, the two auctions brought in over \$2500, contributing to the grand total of \$15,000, which also included several Honorary Committee memberships! That amount is likely to rise, however, as GE matches begin to arrive. Watch for the 5th Annual Harvest for the Pantry Fundraising Dinner to take place in the Fall of 2012!



Jack Sweeney, and Jean and Ed Reilly look over the Silent Auction display of items.

Many thanks for in-kind donations from:

Starbuck's of Niskayuna
Stewart's Shops
ShopRite of Niskayuna
Niskayuna Wine & Liquors
Center Stage Deli
Clara Lasselle



Food, fun and fellowship were the hallmarks of the evening!

Volunteers who helped make the 2011 Harvest for the Pantry the success that it was:

Chef Nicky, Kim Benson, Nancy Fontaine, Marianne Scott, Sharon Therriault, Anna Mattis, Grace Strong, Heather Ipsen, Kerry Lewis, Cheryl Gerstler, Gail & Terry VanValkenburgh, Bob Donohue, Drew & Crys Hamelink, Pat & Don Wheeler, Jim & Nancy Bedard, Chris Rush, Nancy Virkler, Ruth Quinn, Joan LaMonica.

Thank you, everyone!!!

2011 Harvest for the Pantry Honorary Committee Members

Executive Chef (\$300 level)

Robert & Anastasia Fenton
Friends of SICM
Paul & Susan Houpt
Marvin & Company
Ellie & Gene Rowland

Maitre de (\$150 level)

Al & Carolyn Canova
Sharon Carter & George Warner
Mr. & Mrs. William Clasen
William Eberle
Rev. Phillip & Janet Grigsby
Drew & Crys Hamelink

Maitre de (cont'd)

John & Mary Held
Clara & Ralph Lasselle
Jim & Peg Miller
Peter & Barbara Notch
Bob & Pat Obrecht
Chris & Pat Rush
Schenectady Federation of Teachers
Helga Schroeter
Marianne and Roy Scott
Austin & Marti Spang
Jack & Susan Sweeney
Congressman Paul Tonko
Don & Pat Wheeler



Server (\$75 level)

Edward & Mary Cummings
Thomas & Cheryl Della Sala
Karen B. Johnson
Shirley Joosten
Margaret King
Sam Lefkowitz
Tom & Sharon
Therriault
Ruth Varley

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this event! We truly appreciate your support!

Changes at the Damien Center

The Schenectady Damien Center's program are reflecting the changing situation of HIV and AIDS in our community. The Center is open for fewer meals but is seeking to increase programming and information for guests. When first developed the centers in the region were combined. Now we are exploring ways to collaborate more closely with the other centers, especially the Albany Damien Center. Guests are interested in seeing if they can access, for example, the PAWS program of the Albany Damien Center. PAWS stands for Pets Are Wonderful Support and provides pets and support to persons living with the virus.

Under Dan Butterworth's leadership, the Center gathered a group of concerned individuals and providers to work on strategic planning for the Center. We are discerning the services and needs the Center can realistically respond to, given the changing financial resources for AIDS work. This group will be meeting to continue the planning and work on the Center's future.

The Center welcomes volunteers to help with meals and other activities; please call Allison Williams at the Center (374-0848) or the SICM office.



Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow. . .

Hard to Believe Summer Lunch is Just Around the Corner!



It may be winter now, but SICM is planning for summer lunch to begin June 25, 2012. In just a few months children will be back in parks, on church lawns, and in church reception halls waiting for their free lunch.

Last summer we met a family of 3 at the Steinmetz Homes site—a set of 4-year-old twins (a boy named Kevy, a girl named Keya) with their single, disabled Dad. I asked the children if the lunch was good. Both children said, “we eat lunch here every day. My Daddy brings us for lunch.” “My favorite is chicken,” said Kevy. Keya just said, “I like it here, I like lunch.” When asked about summer lunch, the father answered, “I need the free summer lunch to give my children a good meal each day, since I lost income and only get benefits once a month.”

SICM and our volunteers served over 35,000 lunches in 2011, yet the need is much greater. We are looking to expand to at least two more sites in the 2012 year, bringing our total to 15 sites. We are once again seeking up to 70 volunteer teams from congregations and businesses to help us feed the children. Signups will begin during April. If you have any questions, contact Allison Williams at allisonw@sicm.us or by calling 374-2683.



SICM Summer Interns

Once again, SICM is looking to hire older high school and college students for the Summer Internship Program and also sponsoring congregations. Students spend approximately 10 weeks working either part-time or full-time in the various SICM programs, including Summer Lunch, Damien Center, Emergency Food Pantry, Edible Playgrounds and in the SICM office. Last summer SICM partnered with Home Furnishings to provide some “people power” to help them out, and we hope to do the same this summer. Interns meet as a group on a regular basis with the Internship Coordinator to discuss and reflect upon their experiences. Position descriptions and application materials will be available on the SICM website (www.sicm.us) in



Summer 2011 SICM Interns



February. Click on SICM Programs on the sidebar, then select Summer Programs, and scroll down to the Summer Internship Program. A preference is given to those who have cars, and the **deadline for applications is March 15, 2012**. If you are interested in supporting a Summer Intern, please let us know. Questions? Contact Janet Mattis, Community Outreach and Intern Coordinator at jmattis@sicm.us or 374-2683.

Food Program

2011 Food Drives over 500 pounds:

Food Program Statistics:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Individuals Served</u>	<u>Meals Served</u>
<u>Totals for 2008</u>	37, 721	339,489
<u>Totals for 2009</u>	40,333	362,997
<u>Totals for 2010</u>	43,787	394,083
<u>Totals for 2011</u>	43,486	391,374

MVP
 Capital Region Career and Tech School/ BOCES
 Siemans
 Schalmont Middle School
 Niskayuna Girl Scouts Troop # 209
 ARC
 Pashley Elementary School
 Valued Options



HELP!



We need volunteers at the Emergency Food Pantry! If you have one hour a month, a few hours a week, or a regular day that you can volunteer, please contact Gail Van Valkenburgh at 346-4035.



SICM Sponsors a Summer STEM Program at Steinmetz Park

Building upon the success of the winter and spring STEM enrichment program (Science, Technology, Education, Math), SICM received Schenectady City School System support to conduct a two-week STEM camp. It was held in Steinmetz Park during two weeks in July.



Led by a certified teacher and assistant, the program featured a visit from Dean Davis, a visit to the Schenectady Museum, the Children's Museum, and daily learning activities. About 30 youth took part; each camp was similar.

The camp was held in conjunction with the SICM summer lunch program, and some youth stayed later for the program sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club.

This activity was an outgrowth of the Safe Parks and Edible Playgrounds initiative, which has sought to increase activities for youth in all the city's parks. SICM, with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Roots and Wisdom Program, sponsored an "edible playground" (youth garden) also in Steinmetz Park. This garden was started by youth at Yates School in the spring as a teaching garden and then continued in the summer.

Gifts & Grants

SICM is blessed with continued volunteer and financial support from a variety of individuals, congregations, religious organizations, businesses and foundations. SICM is grateful to all of them.

Thank you to the Consolidated Federal Campaign; Contributor's Choice of United Way and State Employees Federated Appeal. Record numbers responded to the GE Foundation's Gift Matching program (and the previous double match)! Thank you also to congregations that hosted SICM summer lunch sites.

Many thanks to all for your support! In recent months, SICM programs received support from:

Overall Support

Troy Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (now the Upstate NY Conference of the UMC)

Bechtel Corporation (KAPL)

Holmes-Bishop Charitable Fund

Our Lady of Fatima's Community Tomato Garden

Emergency Food Pantry/Organization

Edward D. Cammarota Foundation

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Lounsbury Family Foundation

Reformed Church World Service

SEFCU Foundation

WGY Christmas Wish

The Wright Family Foundation

Schenectady Community Action Program

Troy Savings Bank Foundation

Stewarts Holiday Match

Schenectady Damien Center

William Gundry Broughton Charitable Foundation (for Renovations)

Community AIDS Partnership of the Capital Region

Equinox Foundation

Troy Savings Bank Foundation

Stewarts Holiday Match

SEFCU Foundation

Summer Lunch

Jr. League-Schenectady & Saratoga Volunteer Award

Niskayuna Co-op

Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York

REMINDER: SICM is registered with the **State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA)** and the **Combined Federated Campaign** (federal employees) of the Capital Region making it easy to contribute on a regular basis. SICM's SEFA # is 50 - 00396.

Attention GE Matching Donors:

Call in Your Donation to the GE Foundation

You can do this by calling them at 1-800-305-0669 or by going to their website: www.gefoundation.com/matchinggifts. Gifts must be a tax deductible contribution of \$25 or more, paid directly to the organization (SICM) and must be from the donor's own assets. A gift made within the calendar year must be registered by the following January 31 in order for us to get matching funds from GE. Please refer to us as Schenectady Inner City Ministry in your contact with the GE Foundation. Every matching fund gift is important to us. If you forget, we miss out on those matching funds. Especially in these days of hard economic times, those GE Matching Funds would help us tremendously. Call SICM at 374-2683 and speak with Barb Bieniek, Business Manager, if you have any questions. Or direct your questions to GE Foundation at 1-800-305-0669 or gesupport@cybergrants.com.

SICM Staff Updates

SICM has had some additions to our staff over the past several months. In the fall, as the Summer Lunch program was drawing to a close, Allison Williams shifted her role from Summer Lunch Coordinator to Interim Program Manager at the Damien Center. She will be shifting back to Summer Lunch responsibilities in the early spring, and we will be advertising for a permanent replacement for that position. Currently Rashad Williams is the Interim Site Coordinator at the Damien Center, and we will also be advertising for a permanent replacement for that position, as well. In addition, Chris Henry joined us in September as a Covenanter from First Reformed Church of Schenectady. Chris divides his time between the Damien Center and the Emergency Food Pantry, and will be with us until the summer.

Welcome to all!

The Last Word *by Peter Notch, SICM*



“Festina lente” and Long Term Planning

There is a tree outside of my back door, which holds onto its leaves way beyond the time the leaves of all the other trees in the yard have fallen. It is a source of frustration for me, who would like to get the yard work done once and for all before the onset of winter. I have thought about shaking it or turning the leaf blower on it, but it seems to have a timeframe that I can neither comprehend nor appreciate. My wife tells me that the tree is teaching me patience.

When I look out at this enigma from the window when I am at the computer, I am reminded of a phrase from my high school Latin class of long ago: “Festina lente,” meaning “make haste slowly.” It suggests that activities should be performed with a proper balance of urgency and diligence. If tasks are rushed too quickly, then mistakes are made, and good long-term results are not achieved.

SICM has attempted throughout its history to meet the ever-changing needs of the urban community and the people who live there. We have often perceived needs where we would like to jump right in and help, before anyone else does. But, we too, have often needed to “make haste slowly”. We have needed to look at our resources of time, money and staff carefully. We have needed to plan.

This continues to be the case today. With great needs and limited resources, we need to not think about the “leaf blower and shaking the tree” approach, learn a little patience, and start careful long term planning.

Ministry Notes *(continued from page 2)*

However we learned from the first pilot and made plans for the second, in June 2011. This turned out to be so successful that we unfortunately had to turn away some who came very close to the end. However, all were encouraged to participate in the county’s program.

One of the big challenges of the project was trying to contact individuals and households that are largely renters, not owners. We developed some laminated fact sheets that people found helpful.

During the course of this project, the county decided to end the fee requested to leave household hazardous waste at the county site. In addition with the success of the collections, they indicate they are considering ways to have a city collection in the future.

Doug Morrison of the state’s DEC and other members of the DEC were very helpful with the effort. The county, with Jeff Edwards as the lead, was similarly very helpful throughout. Jeff even volunteered to help on the collection days (with Gary Feinland, another FUSS SICM delegate, with others).

If you had asked me before this effort whether SICM would be doing a household hazardous waste collection, I probably would have look at you rather strangely. It turned out that this project was the only one of its kind funded through this state grant, and they were very interested to see the results.

God is Good!

Rev. Phil Grigsby

If you want further information on this topic, Nancy, Allison, or I am glad to talk with you, share the laminated form, and also encourage you to use the Schenectady County web site which has current information on collections and how to recycle or use a variety of hazardous items.

In Memoriam

SICM mourns the loss of several friends: Marilyn Berrigan, longtime SICM delegate from Our Redeemer Lutheran Church; Norm Cover, former member of SICM Steering Committee, and delegate from Rotterdam United Methodist Church; Alan Lanzendorf, delegate from Zion Lutheran Church; Verna Orr, wife of the former Methodist Pastor Thomas Orr (d. 2000), and SICM advocate from Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church, and Andrew Geier, SICM delegate from Carman United Methodist Church.

“Blessed are the dear who die in the Lord; their good works follow them.”

