

# CYO Marquee

"Serving Mercer County Youth Since 1952"

Mercer County CYO Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2010

Volume 16 Issue 1

## GET TO KNOW THE CYO'S NEWEST HOME FOR KIDS, THE HOLLOWBROOK COMMUNITY CENTER

Most of us know the CYO Center on Broad St. in Trenton; the old RKO Theatre converted into the sprawling Community Center with the beautiful and meticulous gymnasium, located on the gateway from Hamilton to Trenton. It's Hollywood like; historic, newly renovated marquee is seen by all as they travel to the Sun Bank Arena or to downtown Trenton. Most of us also know the CYO in Yardville, the 23 acre Day Camp and Pre-School with the Olympic sized swimming pool and Country Club-like grounds. Its' 52nd Summer Day Camp about to begin reminds us of carefree childhood memories growing up. Each has its own identity and personality, yet ultimately serves the same purpose, which is to care for children.

The Hollowbrook Community Center is no different, and now, the services over two years under the direction of the CYO Hollowbrook remains a busy and valuable place to the residents of Ewing Township. At the end of the day it too is very similar to the CYO Trenton and Yardville because it serves its purpose of caring for children and remains a very active place seven days a week. The Center is owned by Ewing Township and located on Hollowbrook Dr. off Green Lane, a stone's throw from The College of New Jersey. The identity and personality that the Hollowbrook Community Center would take on would be just that of Community and the ability of multiple tenants to operate their programs independently but with minimal problems. CYO operates four pre-school classes for 75 students in the two story building, as well as a nine week Summer Day Camp for 50 campers, where the pool is the big attraction. Mercer County Head Start is a tenant as well and pre-school provider for 30 students. The grand Community Room with its stage is good for numerous tenant or community events which keeps the Center hopping seven days a week. In addition, the upstairs County Library, small private school, the Concern Citizens of Ewing Township, and limited programming for senior citizens are reasons why the center remains busy all the time.

The Hollowbrook Community is an invaluable resource to Ewing Township, the building tenants and area residents as a hub of daily activity. It is truly a hidden jewel in Mercer County.



Ewing Pre-School students pose for a picture in front of the PNC planetarium in the Hollowbrook Community Room during Week of the Young Child. (See related story on page 2)

## TUTORING GRANT RECEIVED FROM TD BANK

TD Bank, through the TD Charitable Foundation, recently donated \$5,000 to the CYO as part of the bank's commitment to giving back to the community. The funds will be used for the Trenton Center After School Program's Tutoring Services, which have served more than 200 students, age 5-12, since initiation in 2006. Most students in CYO's Trenton Center ASP are from single parent, low income families, and for many, CYO is the only affordable childcare available and one of the only potential sources of academic assistance. "We are very proud of our tutoring program, and thrilled with this new partnership with TD Bank", said Tom Mladenetz, CYO's Executive Director, "there are many Trenton children who don't qualify for publicly supported tutoring programs, or whose needs continue after public monies run out. Through community partnerships like this one, CYO's tutoring program can help all children, regardless of public funding limitations. We thank TD Bank for stepping up and encourage other community businesses to do likewise."



John Jordan (center), TD Bank Vice-President and Manager of Trenton's TD Bank, presents a check to CYO Executive Director, Thomas G. Mladenetz, as CYO's Grant Proposal Writer, Nancy Podeszwa, looks on.

## TD BANK AFFINITY PROGRAM

The TD Bank Affinity Membership Program is a specially designed program for non-profit groups and an easy way to raise money for the organization. At TD Bank, the growth of non-profit groups such as the CYO is important. The more members who bank with TD the more money an organization can earn. There are no costs involved. TD Bank will make annual contributions to the CYO based on the average balance of its member's accounts. Sign up for a TD Bank Account today, let TD know that you are interesting in registering under the CYO, and the contributions begin. For more information contact TD Bank at 1-888-751-9000 and join the newly formed partnership between the CYO and TD Bank.

## TRENTON AFTER SCHOOL PARTNERS WITH CATHOLIC CHARITIES

The Trenton After School Program has partnered with Catholic Charities to run the Botovin Life Skills Program which is a groundbreaking substance abuse and violence prevention program and one of the most effective evidence-based programs used today. The oldest boys and girls in the ASP will participate in the 12 week program and their parents will be invited to hear how effective the program is to reduce violence and other high-risk behaviors.

## DENISE DICKERSON, EWING PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER RECEIVEDS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Mrs. Denise Dickerson from the Ewing Pre-School was recently honored with the Terri Lynne Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Awards. The award ceremony took place April 15th at the Please Touch Museum in Philadelphia. The selection was based on her project proposal and recommendations from peers and parents, and sponsored by Children's Tylenol. Denise's project involves providing more hands on materials in the Discovery Area and enhancing her Library Area with headphones and stories on CD for the young two and a half year olds in her class. She was awarded \$500 towards her project and \$500 for herself. Congratulation Denise, the CYO is proud of you.



Denise Dickerson poses for a picture in front of the Terri Lynne Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Awards poster at the recent awards ceremony at Philadelphia's Please Touch Museum.

## EWING PRE-SCHOOL

Week of the Young Child was celebrated at the Ewing Pre-School April 11-17. On April 14th the children visited the planetarium here at the center. PNC Grow Up Great Foundation provided Sesame Street One World, One Sky: Big Bird's Adventure, a cross-cultural planetarium show geared toward children ages 4-6 that provides an enriching, exciting and interactive introduction to astronomy and other sciences. Big Bird, Elmo, and Hu Hu Zhu, a Muppet from Zhima Jie, the Chinese co-production of Sesame Street, take the children on an imaginary trip to the moon, to the delight of children in both the United States and China. On April 15th the Ewing children participated in Early Mercer Reads. Parents and teachers read stories between 9:30 and 10:30. Centers across Mercer County participated in this early literacy activity. On April 16th we ended the week with a Make Your Own Sundae ice cream party. We also enjoyed our recent Spring trip to the circus on May 21 and look forward to Graduation on June 18. Our Summer camp program will begin on June 23rd. Many new and exciting activities will be added this Summer. Summer camp has added 10 additional camper spaces to accommodate the needs of the community.

## YARDVILLE PRE-SCHOOL SAYS "CHICK US OUT"



Yardville Pre-School student Colin James holds one of the chicks that recently hatched.

The Yardville Pre-School students participated in its annual Chick Hatching Experiment. The pre-school received twelve chicken eggs from Quiver Farm right in time for Easter and the arrival of Spring. A farmer from Quiver introduced the eggs and how to care for them with an interesting presentation that included a live chicken and hen. For five days the children acted as mother hen. With assistance from their teachers they added water to the incubator to create moisture, they rolled the eggs, and watched for any cracks. The children were delighted when the first egg started to hatch! Many children dragged their parents in to observe the egg hatching and some of them stayed after their scheduled departure times just to watch this miracle happen. After the chicks hatched and were moved from the incubator into the brooder box; the children were given chances to feed and hold the chicks! During this unit the children learned so much. They learned not only the life cycle of a chicken but even about farm life and crops that grow there. This was voted the best activity of the year by the students in the Orange Classroom!



Maria Schultz, left, accepts a check in the amount of \$1,200 from CYO Executive Director, Tom Mladenetz, for a basketball clinic fundraiser benefitting Ryan's Quest, that was held at the CYO Center on December 29. Special thanks goes out to the Rider University Mens Basketball Team.

## KEEP HIS WISHES ALIVE CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION (CYO) OF MERCER COUNTY MONSIGNOR TOOMEY FUND



The CYO is proud of the establishment of the Monsignor Toomey Fund which was created from the wishes of the late Monsignor Leonard R. Toomey, CYO founder. The fund honors the memory of Monsignor through something that was always near and dear to his heart, the CYO. Monsignor's last public appearance took place at the CYO Yardville Day Camp 50th Anniversary Picnic on July 12, 2008, and although he wasn't feeling 100% this day he wouldn't have missed it for the World. The fund was started in large part through a generous bequest from him, and his wishes are consistent

with the goals set for the fund which include CYO facility improvements, especially at the Yardville site where more indoor space is needed to accommodate the growing programs there, and for yearly scholarships offered to children to attend the CYO Camp in Yardville.

This year the CYO accepted four campers into the Yardville Day Camp for a total of six sessions from start-up funds from the Monsignor Toomey Fund. Help us continue these scholarships in the future and our hopes for necessary expansion of our facility. Any individual, business, or organization wishing to honor the memory of Monsignor Toomey may make a donation by

visiting our website at [www.cyomercer.org](http://www.cyomercer.org) and finding the Monsignor Toomey Fund link, or tear off the attached form and send the donation to Mercer County CYO 453 Yardville-Allentown Rd. Yardville, NJ 08620, Attn: Tom Mladenetz. For further information, please call the CYO Office at (609) 585-4280 x 107. The CYO is forever grateful to Monsignor Toomey for all he did and the establishment of this fund is a beautiful way to keep his memory alive and make sure his wishes are met.

Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person (if other than donor) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount:	\$1000 _____	\$100 _____
	\$500 _____	\$50 _____
	\$250 _____	Other _____



Employees from Jansen Pharmaceutical prepare to paint the swimming pool, spread wood chips, and paint picnic tables at the recent Day of Caring in Yardville. Bristol Myers Squibb also sent a few volunteer groups to the CYO Camp this year.

## ATHLETICS

The First Annual Diocesan Cheerleading Competition was held on Saturday, March 27 at the CYO Center. A big crowd turned out to watch the action and to see the Mercer County teams take home the prizes. The OLS / St. Anthony's squad captured first place in both JV and Varsity Team Competitions. In Miss Yell Competitions, Emilie Hendrickson of Incarnation / St. James won the JV Title while Lianna Rossi from OLS / St. Anthony's won on the Varsity level.

The Diocesan Basketball Tournament returned to Mercer County in March following the conclusion of each County playoff. Mercer, Monmouth, Burlington, and Ocean Counties were represented, as a total of 8 teams (2 from each County) qualified for this year's tournament in each of the four divisions Girls and Boys Junior Varsity and Girls and Boys Varsity. On Sunday, March 7th, after an exciting week-long tournament, St. Clement's of Matawan captured the Girls JV title by defeating Trenton Catholic Academy while St. Leo's of Lincroft won the Boys JV title. In Varsity action, St. Catherine's from Spring Lake won the Girls Varsity title while St. Leo's of Lincroft won the Boys Varsity Championship. The league championship was captured by St. Raphael's.

The 56th season of Grammar School basketball ended with 68 teams participating. St. Raphael's / Holy Angels won the first ever Girls Freshmen playoff Championship and St. Anthony's of Padua Green captured the Championship in the Boys Freshmen Blue Division while St. Greg's won the freshmen Red and White Division. In Girls and Boys JV and Girls Varsity playoff action, St. Anthony's of Padua won the championships and in Boys Varsity the champs were Trenton Catholic Academy. Back from a 25 year absence was the High School league. The league was comprised of 5 teams and played on Saturday and Sunday evenings and sophomore and Junior, non-Varsity players were eligible. The league championship was captured by St. Mary's of Bordentown.



A cheerleader is spun high into the air in the CYO Center at the Diocesan Cheerleading Tournament.



The judges concentrate on the scoring at the recent Diocesan Cheerleading Tournament.

## 4TH BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME, HOLD THE DATE!

The date is set, Sunday, November 21, 2010 for the 4th Basketball Hall of Fame Diner and Awards Banquet. This year, the event will be held at the Nottingham Ballroom, beginning at 3:00PM. This Program, established in 2004 and held every other year, honors the top male and female players, coaches, referees, and special contributors to the CYO Basketball Program over the last 52 years. A selection and planning committee has formed and continues to meet to organize the event. More information will follow as we approach the Fall, however, for tickets or sponsorship opportunities, or general questions contact Patrick Hardiman at (609) 585-4280 x 102 or via e-mail at phardiman@cyomercer.org

## YARDVILLE SUMMER PROGRAM AVAILABILITY - EVENING SWIM LESSONS & TEEN TRAVEL CAMP

Limited spaces are available for the CYO Yardville Evening Swim Lesson Program. The eight week Program is for children ages 4-14 from June 28 to August 18. The classes run on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings from 6:00-6:45 or 7:00-7:45. The Program Supervisor is Andrea Sirak, a State-certified Teacher, a Water Safety Instructor and long time American Red Cross Swimming Instructor. The maximum teacher-student ratio will be 1:10. American Red Cross Swimming levels 1 through 7 are offered. The cost is \$80. For more information, or to register contact the CYO Yardville at (609) 585-4280 x 103, or visit our website at [www.cyomercer.org](http://www.cyomercer.org) and find the Evening Swim lesson link. For specific swim related questions you may contact Program Coordinator Andrea Sirak at (609) 396-8383 x 22.

The Teen Travel Camp for 13-15 year olds also has limited availability. The camp runs for four weeks, July 29 through August 13 and registration can be done by the week or for all four weeks. Trips include Great Adventure, Liberty Science Center, Rockville Climbing Center, and Bushkill Falls to name a few. For a complete listing of the trips, to download a registration form, or more information visit our website at [www.cyomercer.org](http://www.cyomercer.org) and find the Teen Travel Camp link, or call us at (609) 585-4280 x 103.

## TWO CYO BASKETBALL GRADUATES RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

The CYO Grammar School Basketball League is often considered the premiere youth league not only in Mercer County but possibly the State of New Jersey. The league continues to stand the test of time and has a rich tradition of sending graduates on to the next levels as stars. This year is no different as Frantz Massenat, (TCA) and Dana Jeter, (St. Raphael's - Holy Angels), CYO stars during the 2005-2006 season made headlines again as they were recently honored at the Golden Wave Club's Fr. Clarence O'Shea Memorial Breakfast earlier this month.

Massenat recently received the Jack Cryan Memorial Award which was created 40 years ago, and has become synonymous with boys basketball excellence in Mercer County. The award goes to a Senior who displays outstanding sportsmanship, was a team leader, and a gentleman on and off the court, and was created to honor the memory of the late local basketball star who died 42 years ago of cancer at age 29. Frantz will graduate from TCA in June and continue his basketball career at Division 1 Drexel University. Massenat, who led his Iron Mikes squad to the New Jersey high school basketball Tournament of Champions crown in March, began and fine tuned his basketball career at the Mercer County CYO, as did a large majority of the previous Jack Cryan Award winners.

Dana Jeter received the Renee Keister Award, which is considered the most prestigious individual award in CVC girl's basketball. Renee Keister, a former CYO graduate herself, and member of the CYO Basketball Hall of Fame was a High School star at McCorristin who was paralyzed in a fall. Jeter's offensive firepower and dedication to hard work made her the wise choice as the recipient. Jeter became the second leading scorer in school history this past season, averaging 14.5 point per game and led her Steinert Spartans to a school record 23 wins.

## MERCER COUNTY CYO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## MERCER COUNTY CYO FULL TIME STAFF LISTING

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**Trenton Program Director**  
Mark Newman

**Administrative Director**  
Donna Zolnierzak

**Athletic Director/Teen Program Director**  
Quincy Walzer

**Administrative Asst./Financial Services**  
Kathy Schroeder

**Family Workers**  
Carmen Davila  
Gloribee Pica

**Grant Proposal Writer**  
Nancy Podeszwa

**Yardville Pre-School Staff**  
Kara DeBonis (Head Teacher/Supervisor)

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Carol Blanche	Adria Frascella	Linda Shulman
Michelle DeLena	Tina Lestician	Chris Villani

Dan Bossio (Yardville Program Coordinator)

**Trenton Pre-School Staff**

Tamilyn Bradford	Ivelisse Hernandez	Nadia Rowe
Ayo Akiwowo	Amy Jacobsen	Elisa Simas
Griselle DeJesus	Romona Jimenez	Dessie Smith
Ingrid Garcia	Michelle Lanning	Jerilyn Tykarski
	Hipolita Lopez	

**Ewing Pre-School Staff**

<b>Ewing Branch Director</b>	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>
Linda Kraut	Debbie Kirschenbaum

**Pre-School Staff**

Gladys Brown	Robyn Fratticcioli	Jasmine Stacey
Denise Dickerson	Gae Santiago	Helen Woodland
Mabel Dyous	Deborah Smith	

## IN MEMORIAM



The CYO lost a great friend and a longtime valuable employee late last year when Mary Kondash passed away December 21, 2009 at the age of 39. Her sudden death caught all of us off guard, and still five months later we at the CYO miss her dearly, and will continue to miss her for years to come. Mary will be remembered in many different ways by everyone who she worked with; however, we would all agree that what we'll remember most of all was her heart of gold. She truly loved and cared for the CYO, her family, her co-workers and their families, and the children that the CYO serves and their families.

The CYO was a part of Mary's life for what seemed like forever. As a young child Mary and her siblings attended the CYO Camp in Yardville and the After school Program in Trenton. When she graduated from the CYO Program in 1985, she began as a volunteer Counselor-In-Training where she served for two years, and then in 1987, after her graduation from Nottingham High School, she was hired as a Junior Counselor and remained employed at the CYO for over 22 years until her passing. During these 22 years Mary held numerous positions including: Junior Counselor, Senior Counselor, Day Camp and After School Program Arts & Crafts Instructor, Secretary, Teen Program Assistant, Trenton Pre-School Assistant, Athletic Program Assistant, and most recently as the Food Manager at the Trenton CYO. Inside of each position Mary did so many things, things that made her extremely valuable, a true asset, and difficult to replace.

Mary coordinated Trenton REC and After School Program transportation, a role that only those who have done it (or have direct knowledge of it) would realize the difficulty of it. The key to this responsibility is timing and planning, for the pick-up and drop off, and involves the coordination of up to 15 different schools and principals to deal with, 100 different students, 4 different drivers and vehicles, several different dismissal times, the knowledge of the City of Trenton, and many headaches, yet Mary always got it done. Mary planned games and events inside of the Teen Program, helped out as needed with the Pre-School, and coordinated and coached the CYO After school Program Team for the Annual Grammar School Track & Field Meet. She also greeted, laughed and smiled with spectators coming and going for CYO evening and weekend basketball games, many of whom got to know her well, and would ask where she was if she had the day off. "As a Sacred Heart School parent, coming to the game was fun. You made my days, I wasn't into basketball-but my two sons played on the team. I will miss you dearly. What a beautiful person on the inside and outside. I'm so glad you touched my life in so many ways." (Anonymous) She would hop behind the scorers table at a basketball game if she had to, or get behind the wheel of a van in a pinch to pick-up some students. As the CYO grew Mary grew too, from a child, to a teenager, and finally into her most recent role as Food Manager. In this role, she was responsible for the ordering, preparation, and coordination of the meals and snacks for the Pre-School, REC Camp, and After School Programs, and started a cooking club for the Trenton After School Program. Under her watch as Food Manager, she oversaw the purchase of a new stove, several new refrigeration units, and a new look to an old kitchen. Whatever was asked of Mary she did it, and she did it because of her love for the children who attended the CYO.

The CYO Executive Director, Tom Mladenetz, knew Mary since she was a young child. "Back in the late 1970's / early 1980's when I saw a Senior Counselor in the Trenton After School Program and Yardville Day Camp, Mary and her siblings were active participants in those programs", according to Mr. Mladenetz; "I remember driving the big, old CYO bus and picking up the Kondash children at Sacred Heart School and bringing them to the CYO Center." Tom went on to offer the following comments: "To see Mary mature into a woman and become a key member of the CYO staff for so many years was very gratifying. In my position, I rely on so many people to help keep our CYO operation running smoothly. But, I could honestly say, I probably relied on Mary for more little things (and some not so little) than I have with anyone else over the years. I miss her from a work standpoint, for sure. Most of all, I miss her voice and laugh, and miss seeing her hug "her CYO kids" when they arrived. Mary's passing is a huge loss for the CYO."

Mary touched the lives of thousands of young children and their families in 22 years at the CYO, and loved them all, but most of all loved her family, and loved talking about her nephew and two nieces. Mary is survived by her parents Andrew Kondash and Patricia Lindley Kondash, a brother and sister-in-law, Fred Sr. and Tracy Kondash, two sisters, Linda and Michelle Kondash, her nephew Freddy Jr., and her two nieces, Jessica and Alayna.

The CYO will continue to move forward with but will never forget the past which included Mary Kondash. We will always have her memory and stories of such a special, wonderful, caring, loving, and valued friend, person, and employee with a heart of gold. God Bless you Mary and rest in peace, we will always love you!



**Trenton CYO Center**  
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**Ewing Branch**  
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