

Co Donegal VEC

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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Gortahork Assist Tidy Towns

Gortahork Youthreach is assisting the Gortahork Tidy Towns Committee in enhancing the appearance of the town through decorating derelict houses to give them a more attractive demeanour. This is achieved through drawing a series of tastefully decorated boards which are placed in the windows of the property and helps to allay the sense of dereliction caused by vacant and dilapidated places.

Youthreach would like to see such properties brought back into use but this cosmetic arrangement will defer some of the unattractiveness of the town for the present.



Letterkenny Learners Visit Sam!



Letterkenny Youthreach LCA class decided to go have a look at the Sam Maguire cup before it became our property!!!! As a precursor to the All-Ireland Football Final the cup was on display in the Ulster Bank in Letterkenny the week before the Final. Thomas Cullen and Andy Dowds took a group to visit.

Little did we know that it would be ours to keep for a year!!!! Well done Jim McGuinness and the boys from all in Letterkenny Youthreach.

Centres Awarded HSE Girls Active Funding

Once again this year all Youthreach centres have been awarded funding from the HSE to promote the Girls Active programme in the centres. Staff from each centre attended training in September with Lynda McGuinness, the HSE's Physical Activity Project Officer and will begin programmes in the centres that the girls themselves want to do. Last year activities include dancing, zumba and walking.



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Welcome... to the third edition of our 2012 newsletter. Centres have been busy since the summer break and this newsletter shows some of their summer programme work as well as more recent activities since their return. This has included work on the Peace III funded Restorative Practice project and fundraising. The next edition will be available in December; for now, happy Halloween!

Dr Sandra Buchanan, Youthreach County Coordinator



Youthreach Masterchef Final 2012

On Tuesday 23 October the six Youthreach centres (Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Glengad, Gortahork, Letterkenny and Lifford) held their second annual Masterchef final. Teams of two from each centre competed to cook a main course and dessert on a budget of €20. The final was judged by Highland Radio's Breakfast show host John Breslin who was formerly a chef himself and AEO Martin Gormley. They had a tough job but the eventual winners were Gortahork Youthreach with Buncrana Youthreach runners up. Well done to the six teams!



Buncrana Parents Participate in Restorative Practice Project



The Peace III Restorative Practice Project, which all the Youthreach centres are engaged in along with fourteen post-primary schools, Donegal Youth Service and Foróige, has now moved into the third element of the project, organisational activity. Having participated in training in November 2011 and completed two research instruments earlier this year, centres have put together a plan to further embed restorative practice in their centres from September 2012-April 2013. They have received a small amount of funding from the project to enable them to implement the plan. On Wednesday 19th of September Youthreach Buncrana/Glengad invited the parents (pictured

left) of their trainees into the centre for a brief introduction on Restorative Practices. The session was facilitated by Paddy O Connor. Parents were treated to a light lunch and then an informal discussion regarding the origins and uses of restorative practices. The parents were delighted with the session and all of them voiced their approval of this positive and inclusive method in dealing with discipline issues. The centre has planned several training sessions for both staff and trainees over the coming year. Staff will be trained in Active Listening Skills and How to Deal with Conflict and all staff will get the opportunity to receive mentoring and support from Paddy on a one to one basis. They are looking forward to embracing this challenging and innovative practice.

PEACE III Donegal CDB Peace & Reconciliation Partnership



Project supported by PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by Donegal County Council

Letterkenny Prepare for Gaisce Awards

As part of Letterkenny Youthreach Gaisce awards, a group went to Gartan Outdoor Pursuit Centre to achieve their adventure award just before the summer. This involved a trek through very rough terrain that lasted nearly four hours. The learners were exhausted after it and many had blisters for days. The picture shows the group embarking on a night line where everyone is blindfolded and you are completely dependant on the instructions of the person in front of you. This was a great exercise and many learners showed great leadership skills. Well done to those who achieved the Gaisce award they were looking for! Some also completed the Adventure Section of the award while they were there.



Ballyshannon Hosts Cheerios Breakfast Fundraiser

On Friday 12 October Ballyshannon hosted a *Cheerios* Childline Breakfast together morning and raised €40 for the charity. Learners donated €2 each and were given a box of *Cheerios* in return. Childline is a great charity and everyone was delighted to help so thanks to everyone who participated and contributed to the worthy cause!

Pictured Left: Learners Peter, Alistair, Ryan Danielle and Callum enjoying the Breakfast Together morning!; Middle: Matty, Alistair and Callum getting their cereal; Right: Danielle enjoying her breakfast.



Lifford Get Busy for Gaisce



Lifford Youthreach learners recently helped out the Tidy Towns Association as part of their involvement in Gaisce. They are aiming to obtain a Bronze medal and this project was part of the Community Involvement module. A number of learners spent numerous Friday mornings helping to collect litter in and around the town. Resource Tutor Aidan Callaghan, who coordinates Gaisce in the Centre, explains “the whole idea of this particular part of Gaisce is that it encourages young people to connect with and take pride in their community”. The learners are currently working on other elements of Gaisce but will

resume their clean up after Christmas. Learners also organised a number of fundraising activities in aid of the Donegal branch of the Alzheimer’s Association. A charity breakfast was cooked by learners and members of the public called in to the Centre to partake. A street collection was



also held in Lifford and a grand total of €803.61 was raised. Well done to all involved.

Pictured right are learners involved in fundraising for the Alzheimer’s Association. Pictured left are learners cooking breakfast as part of the fundraising for the Alzheimer’s Association.