



# Northeast Kingdom Youth Services

N E W S L E T T E R

NEKYS supports youth, their families and communities through quality programs that strengthen positive life skills and encourage stability

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## Mentoring - A WIN WIN!! Situation



Marti (the mentor), left and Jenn (the mentee) pose for the camera at the farm.

This story is really about the essence of a perfect mentoring match - the mentor serves as a positive model and the mentee

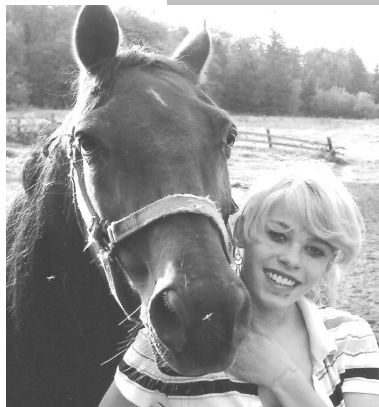
gains skills, confidence and a sense of belonging. Mentors make a difference in the lives of youth and produce lasting memories for the mentee and the mentor.

In Marti's words, "My weekly outing with my mentee, Jenn, to a local horse farm has proven to be a very rewarding experience for me. When we first started going about one year ago, Jenn was extremely timid around the horse, not wanting to even venture

into the stalls on her own. Now, she feeds, brushes, and hugs her favorite horse 'George' every time we go to the farm. I give her so much credit for 'sticking' with this initial challenge and as a result having developed a high level of self-confidence around the horses. The benefits of this experience have been two-fold for me, as through these outings Jenn has also developed a

**Needless to say, I am very proud of my mentee!**

*Marti Walther -  
Mentor*



Jenn and her favorite horse, George.

very caring attitude towards the owner of the farm. I am very thankful to the farm owner for this opportunity. Needless to say, I am so very proud of Jenn."

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### The HighLow Project Brought NEKYS' Staff and Youth Together to Celebrate Success



The HIGHLOW Project brought many youth and staff together to view Ned Castle's poignant photographic and audio display. If you missed it when it was in St. Johnsbury it will be on display at Lyndon State College during the first months of 2011. Call us for more information.

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### NEKYS Services

- Family Connections Program
- Transitional Living and Youth Development Programs
- Elm Street Shelter
- The Living Room
- JUMP Youth Mentoring Program
- Summer Central
- Caledonia & Essex County Court Diversion Programs
- Alcohol Safety Program
- Pre-Sentence Alternative Program
- Balanced and Restorative Justice Program
- Parent Education Program
- Youth in Transition



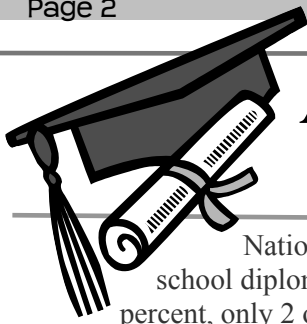
## JUMP Jazz Jubilee 2011

We are planning our annual Jump Jazz Jubilee live- and silent-auction fundraiser to provide financial support for our **JUMP Mentoring program**. Our 2010 Jump Jazz Jubilee raised **\$22,024**. **All funds raised** will go directly to support the JUMP Mentoring program offered by Northeast Kingdom Youth Services.

Please join us for this fun-filled event.

**SAVE THE DATE** FOR THE **JUMP JAZZ JUBILEE**  
Saturday, April 30, 2011 • 6 p.m. • St. Johnsbury Country Club

For information on the JUMP Mentoring Program call our office at 802-748-8732



## A Round of Applause for Graduates

Nationally, only about half of foster youth ever earn a high school diploma. Only 13 percent apply for college. Of that 13 percent, only 2 or 3 percent ever graduate from college (Pew Charitable Trust 2007). Several youth at NEKYS are working to change those statistics.

Here are two examples:

- ♦ *Hilary Maynard talks about her diploma in a short piece she titled- 'My Proud Barrier.'* "The hurdles and barriers in my life have seemed to be endless. However, there are few that I cherish. My diploma is one of them. It may just be a piece of paper but it is one that opens doors. When I look at it, I see so many things for myself: an endless display of the million and one directions I could go in. My only barrier now is the painstaking decision of what I will choose."
- ♦ *Against the odds an 18 year-old female graduated while hospitalized! She is currently enrolled in one class at CCV, and is now registered for three classes for spring. She reports loving college and plans to transfer to Lyndon State College in the fall to study psychology/human services.*



Hilary Maynard—  
Proud Graduate

These youth illustrate the beauty of NEKYS having a continuum of care. They are able to receive support from programs that assist them in becoming financially and emotionally independent adults. It's important to note that at one time the above youth were considered some of the most vulnerable youth in the foster care system. They now have achieved their goal of graduating from High School and are looking forward to creating future life plans; they testify to the resiliency of their character.

## NEKYS Announces New Staff to Support Needs of Youth and Families

We are pleased to announce that Jennifer Fahlbeck has been hired in NEKYS new Fund Development/Public Relations position. Jen brings a wealth of experience from her prior experience here at NEKYS in the Parent Educator position plus grant writing and fund development related work for non-profit community programs. Jen has been active in her communication with staff and would like to share the NEKYS wish list with you all. For more information you can contact Jennifer Fahlbeck at our office—802-748-8732 or email her at [fahlbeck@nekys.org](mailto:fahlbeck@nekys.org)



## NEKYS Wish List

*Winter Clothing*  
*Blankets*  
*Backpacks*  
*New Adult Sleeping Bags*  
*Hand Warmers*  
*Pillows*  
*Healthy Meals & Snacks*  
*Kitchen Supplies*  
*Twin Bed -Covers/Sheets*  
*Phone Cards*  
*Books/CDs*

## Generosity Abounds in the Northeast Kingdom

The following donors contributed to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services between July 1 and November 30 2010. We thank all the friends of NEKYS for their generosity and caring.

Caplan's Army Store	Alexander and Lorraine Black	Molly Lynch
Gene A. Besaw & Associates	Eileen Boland and Don Bredes	Joyce Dobbartin and Bob McCabe
Hale Construction	Alice Carpenter	Dianne Nelson
Lang McLaughry Spera	Reed & Christine Cass	Lucille Oakes
Newport Elks Club	Rodney & Barbara Daniels	Paul and Dorothea Penar
Ryegate Associates	Rita Foley and Jill Kelleher	George and Doris Pierce
St. Mary of the Angels	Dana Caspersen & William Forsythe	David and Patricia Russell
Tom Breslin Community Center	Michael & Jeanine Greenleaf	Albert Salt
Vermont Dept of Forest and Parks	Dianne and Anthony Handy	Joan Smith
Windham Foundation	Kay Hopkins	Linda Somers
Michelle Authier & Craig Dreisbach	Carol & Gerry LaFlamme	Russell and Lois Williams
Robert and Carolyn Bigelow	Frank Landry and Rosalie Vear	Joan Wollrath
Teresa & William Binney	Charles & Salee Lawrence	Edward and Carol Zuccaro



## The Shelter Walk - A Community Project!

Thanks to the generosity of businesses, friends and neighbors in the community, Northeast Kingdom Youth Services' 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Shelter Walk was a big success. It united people from all walks of life and raised over \$16,000 to support NEKYS' Elm Street Shelter in its' continuing effort to provide safe and stable housing and life skills education to homeless area youth. It is a time for our volunteers, board members, Shelter Walk committee members, donors and staff to celebrate the Elm Street Shelter and its' important place in the community. The Walk requires a lot of team work to put on, but the fun



and camaraderie that day is effortless for all who attend. The St. Johnsbury Academy cheerleaders led the walk with much hoopla and enthusiasm and the breakfast and barbecue (all donated by area businesses) were wonderful. Both the food and the gusto helped to keep spirits up on a chilly fall day. Carol Robinson won great prizes for being the highest earning individual walker and the Passumpsic Bank was recognized as the largest earning team. The origami and face painting

tables were busy and the magic show put on by Sally Sherrard of 'Tricky Business' captured the imagination of many young folks. We are already working on next year's Walk (October 2011) and hope you will join us in creating an even bigger and better party. All proceeds provide vital resources to support housing and life skills education for local homeless youth. Since its' inception in October 2007, the Elm Street Shelter has provided 71 youth with over 6213 nights of safe shelter and supportive services. For more information on Walk 2011 and the Elm Street Shelter call us at our office—748-8732.



## We Thank Everyone who Contributed to the Success of Walk 2010

The following donors contributed to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services' Shelter Walk 2010

Effie Baram & Bert Lattanzi  
 Paul & Christine Bengtson  
 Eric and Meredith Berry  
 Mark Bertolini  
 Carol Chmura  
 Mary Dawson  
 Caroline & Sal DeMaio  
 Bill and Pam Eddy  
 Edward Hebebrand  
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 Linda Palmer  
 Gary Reis  
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 The Orvis Co.  
 The Pizza Man  
 Twin State Ford  
 Union Bank  
 Vermont Heritage Water  
 VT Highland Cattle Co.  
 W.B. Mason  
 Weidmann Electrical Tech  
 WGMT Magic 97.7  
 Woodsville Savings Bank



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## Director's Message

## December 2010



Marion Stuart, NEKYS  
Executive Director

Working and volunteering at NEKYS means being a part of supporting youth and families to work through challenges and celebrate successes. It is being part of mentoring and making a difference for young people; part of families having conflicts and learning to work together; part of students graduating against odds with resilience abounding and challenges arising; part of victims of crimes being heard and offenders apologizing; part of the shelter providing a warm place to sleep and food prepared everyday in the Living Room with youth dropping in for a hot meal.....

Recently we heard from one of NEKYS founding members of the Board of Directors, Gretchen Hammer, who said she became involved because she “loved working with kids.” Gretchen shared with us why others got involved in the mid 70s, when teens didn’t have a place to hang out in St. J. and were hanging out by the museum. An article in the newspaper appeared describing how adults were afraid of the youth. Several St. J. Academy students responded by notifying the community they wanted to work with adults regarding this matter. The first meeting was held at the South Congregational Church and several community members attended. The teens selected the adults on the basis that they could work with them. The first project was an outdoor dance and then a teen center started

with meetings in donated spaces. It then became apparent there were homeless teens and a support group was started at Cherry Street. After awhile, professional people got involved and the community came together! It is still happening. I am pleased to announce three new board members—Bob Butterfield, Jane Arthur and Shawn Timson have joined. Respectively they report they got involved because: “I was asked by a current board member whom I respect and admire;” “working with young people is a great place to make a difference;” and “the future of this organization is extremely important to the future of our society as we know it.” Thank you so much Bob, Jane and Shawn for joining the Board!