



*Round Hill  
Community Church*

## *The News Letter*

*January 2006*

### PASTORAL MESSAGE

At the beginning of the new year, we would do well to be reminded of the gracious invitation that Howard Thurman, one of our finest theologians and spiritual writers of the last century, shared in his Christmas message to his own congregation years ago:

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are gone,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock . . .  
The real work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers and sisters,  
To make music in the heart.

In 2006 our church family will be challenged along many different fronts, but none will be as significant or difficult as that which calls us to reclaim the central mission of our being a Christian church within a pluralistic culture. The challenge is to affirm our uniqueness, unashamedly and yet graciously, as a body of believers who find their sense of purpose and identity as a people who seek to follow after the Way of Jesus Christ as Savior . . . and to do so by also showing profound and genuine respect for the uniqueness and richness of other faiths, seeking to foster understanding and a greater sense of community within our global village.

My sense is that the real criteria by which our life together will be judged will not be found in the dogmas or doctrines by which some seek to establish litmus tests for true believing. Rather, the central criteria by which our lives will be judged . . . both as communities of faith and as individuals . . . will be measured by our faithful embrace, by the grace of God, of "the real work of Christmas." For apart from our embrace of such work, we will find ourselves in danger of "reversing the Incarnation" . . . hiding behind the pious cloak of our words, while our hurting and hungry brothers and sisters remain broken and lost for lack of our acts of love.

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### ROUND HILL ANGELS



Dear Round Hill Angels,

We wanted to let you know that all of the presents were successfully delivered and that our adopted families were so happy to receive the beautifully wrapped packages.

One mother who we have helped over the years gave us a little Christmas ornament that was a cardinal bird sitting on a branch. Below the branch was a little sign that read, "Believe in miracles." She also enclosed the following card: "Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I want to express to you that year after year you have been there to help me and my family. We are grateful to have a true angel like you. Your hard work has been a blessing to me and my girls. Thanks for your unselfish touch of help. Thank you."

This card is for everyone in the Round Hill community. Thank you so much for bringing such great happiness to others.

—Nancy and Steve Fuzesi



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### New Director Brings Changes to Church School



The Christian Education Committee is pleased to welcome RHCC member Eileen Brehm as its new Director of Christian Education. Eileen's passion is using drama and other hands-on activities as educational tools to teach the curriculum. Whether she's teaching Shakespeare, the Civil War, or Bible Stories, she believes that we learn better when we are actively engaged in the lesson.

The CE committee has worked with Bob Culp and Eileen to redesign the church school format to better meet the needs of students as well as parents' preferences as noted in a recent survey. Parents would like to see youth spending more time together as a group, rather than immediately going to their classrooms for their lesson. Therefore, children in second through eighth grade will proceed after the children's message to the meeting room where the lesson will be taught to the group by Eileen. The youngest learners will continue to worship in their regular classroom, as the committee felt they may be too young to benefit from the group lesson.

Eileen will lead the group in an interactive and celebrative experience based on the *Bible Quest* multi-age curriculum. After about thirty minutes the children and youth will break into smaller age-appropriate groups for discussion and lesson-related activities led by the parent volunteers. We hope both to foster the children's sense of community within their church family and to accommodate their age-appropriate differences to learning.

The benefits of meeting as a group are many. It allows younger children to experience the mentoring presence of older children; it fosters the development of leadership and active participation of our children and youth; and it enables us to maximize the number of youth who will benefit from Eileen's presence as a skilled and trained teacher. We also believe that this format will require less preparation for the volunteer parent teachers who will now be called upon to lead only a discussion or activity instead of the entire lesson. This format also allows for the re-introduction of music to our program, another priority identified in the parent survey.

To assist in the transition from Sanctuary to Meeting Room, Bob has graciously agreed to tailor the Children's Message to the lesson that will be taught that day. Bob is very enthusiastic about the changes. "The new format being considered for our children and youth is particularly exciting

to me, and I am hopeful that the energy and excitement felt within our (planning) meeting will be multiplied throughout the families within the church. I realize this constitutes a significant shift in the modus operandi within our church school program, but I believe it contains great promise and wonderful possibilities."

Eileen added, "I'm very excited to work with this community of children."

Eileen's education/experience includes a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Massachusetts, where she graduated cum laude; a Masters of Arts in Educational Theatre from New York University; attendance at an intensive study in Educational Theatre at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland; past Director of Education at The Acting Company in NYC; current director at The Drama Club, a summer theatre here in Greenwich. She currently teaches creative drama at The Stanwich School, covering American History and public speaking with students in grades 4 to 8.

### MISSION TRIP 2006

Youth in grade 9 or age 14 and above, college students, and interested adults willing to drive/chaperone are invited to attend this year's Youth Summer Mission Trip taking place August 5-12, 2006 (Saturday through Saturday), at Church of the Covenant/Camp Kum-Ba-Yah in Lynchburg, VA. Parents are welcome upon invitation from their child. Participants stay at Eagle Eyrie Baptist Conference Center.

The week is spent working on the grounds of Camp Kum-Ba-Yah, which serves handicapped children and those who would not otherwise have a chance to enjoy time away from a hot city.

Some highlights of the week are secret pals, taking turns for worship, cleaning and making meals, working as a group, taking tours of the city, mini golf, go carts, and swimming.

The next Mission Trip meeting is with the Putnam Valley Methodist Church on January 8, 2006, after church or Youth Choir until 2:30 p.m. Youth age 14 or older in August 2006 interested in attending this year's summer Mission Trip must attend. If you are unsure about whether or not you are coming, plan to attend to find out more about it.

Jobs include clearing trails, building sheds, painting, and more. The cost of the trip is \$300.00 per person, through fundraising, scholarships, and/or individual fees. Adults willing to use their vehicle to transport participants may be exempt from fees. For more information contact Tina Pusser at [cpusser@aol.com](mailto:cpusser@aol.com) or [tmpusser@pathways-greenwich.org](mailto:tmpusser@pathways-greenwich.org).

Other meeting dates for your calendar:

Feb. 12	Putnam Valley Methodist Church, 9:00 a.m.
Mar. 5	RHCC
Apr. 30	Putnam Valley Methodist Church, 9:00 a.m.
June 23	Overnight at Community House
Late July	Picnic at Putnam Valley Methodist Church
Aug. 5-12	Mission Trip



## YOUTH GROUP

December is always a busy month filled with preparation for the holidays: shopping for gifts, decorating the house, and cooking festive meals. The Youth Group has also been very active, preparing for the holidays with a marathon of events.

At the Advent Workshop the Youth Group helped to set up and clean up, but more important, they helped to inspire young artists as they decorated angels for the Angel Tree. The Angel Tree has been a tradition for many years, and it took only two Sundays this year before every angel had left the tree. The rapid disappearance of the angels may have been aided by the crowd drawn to see the pageant on Sunday, December 11. The pageant was a large success this year: "The best pageant ever," according to Shannon White. Though the high school youth group does not usually participate in the Christmas pageant, we watched it as a group from the balcony.

The next months are also busy as we near the upcoming Youth Ski Trip for members of the Youth Choir. The ski trip occurred last year in January and was led by Chris Kabala.

In January the Youth Group will also host one of the most important discussion groups of the year. Parents will join their children in a workshop to discuss "Sex Drugs, Drinkin, and Rock 'n' Roll" Parents and youth will participate in separate forums to begin and will form a large group later on to exchange theories, hypotheses, and conclusions.

The Youth Group closed out 2005 with a Christmas celebration.



## FORUM NEWS FOR TEENS/PARENTS

### Sex, Drugs, Drinking, and Rock 'n' Roll

Calling all teens, parents

(and other interested adults) . . .

RHCC is taking on the real issues

that families with teens face today.

In a special three-part series, we will

talk about the hot-button topics that many teens deal with on a daily basis.



Tom Mahoney of the Greenwich Health Department will facilitate a conversation first with the youth. Then he'll talk with parents about how to encourage open conversation with their kids and talk about the issues that they face. Finally, everyone will come together to see how we can better understand one another.

Our own Diana Deacon, Tina Pusser, and Shannon White will also be there to facilitate the discussions. Shannon will talk about how our religious history has helped and hindered feelings about certain choices.

All Middle School youth and older are urged to attend sessions specifically geared for their age groups. Parents of children of any age (and other adults) are urged to attend the adult sessions. Tom is a very popular regional speaker and a member of First Congregational Church in Old Greenwich. Here's the schedule:

#### Sunday, January 22

Discussion for Parents and Interested Adults Only  
11:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

#### Wednesday, January 25

Middle School Youth Only – 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Dinner for Both Groups – 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.

High School Youth Only – 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

#### Sunday, January 29

11:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Forum Discussion for Parents and Youth Together  
(Middle School and Older)

Come and join us for this exciting series.

We invite you to come and listen,  
to speak out, and to learn from each other.

This series is open to the community.

**BRING YOUR FRIENDS...ALL ARE WELCOME!**



## LES BEAUX ARTS GALLERY

Oil paintings by Peter Clarke will be on display at Les Beaux Arts Gallery from January 4 through February 13.



Clarke, a Connecticut native, has been painting for most of his adult life. Many of his oil paintings are ocean scenes in the Westport area. Using the impasto technique of applying the paint in layers with a knife, Mr. Clarke is able to capture the water's reflection and movement with the depth of the paint. Other paintings reflect scenes from Clarke's extensive travels throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and the Caribbean. He is the recipient of several prestigious art awards including the Sole Award for Water Paintings.

Clarke has Bachelor's degrees in both Fine Arts and Art Education from The Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, a Master's Degree in Education from the University of Bridgeport, and a Certificate of Advanced Studies (C.A.S.) from Fairfield University. Clarke was an art educator for over fifty years, holding faculty positions in the Fairfield Public Schools, the University of Bridgeport, and the Silvermine Guild of Artists in New Canaan, and was also a consultant for the "Famous Artist School" in Westport. Presently, he conducts an art class of experienced painters in his Westport studio.

His subject matter ranges from a tabletop bowl of pears to a historic scene of old St. Louis. Although he began painting in watercolor, he now works primarily in oils and acrylics. For the past several years Peter Clarke has specialized in painting for local and national banks and universities, including commissions from The Mercantile Bancorporation, Hilton Hotel, and St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri, St. Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, Connecticut, Fairfield County Savings Banks in Fairfield and Noroton, People's Bank branches in Bridgeport and New Canaan, Fairfield University and Yale University Medical School.

## CELL TOWER

This past summer the church signed a lease with Verizon Wireless that would permit Verizon to build a cell phone transmission facility in the woods behind the Community House, 750 feet east of Round Hill Road. In early September Verizon met with Jim Lash, Greenwich's First Selectman, to begin the process of obtaining regulatory approval for the proposed facility. At the town level, the Planning and Zoning Commission has been responsible for reviewing Verizon's application. Public hearings were held by the P&Z in late September and mid-October; on November 1, the P&Z issued a letter that raised two principal concerns: first, does the proposed facility need to have two 115-foot-tall transmission towers, or would lower towers be possible; second, are there alternate technologies that Verizon could consider? It is important for church members to know that both of these matters were thoroughly discussed with Verizon, and with the church's technical consultant, before the church signed the lease with Verizon.

On November 9, Verizon formally filed an application with the Connecticut Siting Council, the state agency that has sole jurisdiction to regulate the siting of facilities such as the one proposed to be built on our church's property. The Siting Council already has begun its process of considering all aspects of Verizon's Application.

**AT 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006,  
AT GREENWICH TOWN HALL,  
THE SITING COUNCIL WILL HOLD A  
PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER  
VERIZON'S APPLICATION,  
AND TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF  
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC  
CONCERNING THE APPLICATION.  
ALL CHURCH MEMBERS INTERESTED  
IN THE CELL FACILITY MATTER  
ARE ENCOURAGED TO  
ATTEND THIS HEARING.**

Members of the Siting Council will be in Greenwich from early afternoon of January 31; weather permitting, there will be another "balloon fly," and members of the Siting Council plan to walk into our woods to inspect the proposed site of the facility. Beginning at 3:00 p.m. the Siting Council will begin its formal review of the application at Town Hall. Although the afternoon proceedings are open to the public, the public will not be invited to speak until the evening. I will make a statement on behalf of the church at the public hearing in the evening.

Please call me if there are any questions or concerns – office (212) 935-6748, home (203) 869-5543.

–Ken Bartels



## MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will be sponsoring several programs over the next two months. On January 22 there will be a breakfast meeting to which both women and men are invited, with a presentation on the new Medicare drug plan. A very special meeting will take place on February 26; our very own Fred Keire will present an illustrated talk on his adventures sailing among the icebergs of the North Atlantic. Continental breakfasts will be served at both events.

Needless to say, the highlight of the RHCC social season will be the evening of Friday, February 10, when the men will host the annual Valentine's Dinner/Dance.

Please note that we anticipate having a breakfast meeting in March. Our guest speaker will be Gilbert Wheless, a landscape architect and founder of Environmental Design Associates in Wilton. Gil has had a wealth of experience in his field and, I am sure, will provide many insights into the finer points of beautifying our homes and workplaces.

—Ron Wilson

### ***Are You Confused by Medicare D?*** **You cannot afford to be!**

Do you know the penalty for not picking a plan by May 15, 2006?

If you miss this enrollment period, you will pay a penalty to enroll late. The penalty is steep, keeps building for every month delayed, and will last as long as you have Medicare drug coverage.

Do you understand the out-of-pocket costs?

How can you find out if you qualify for extra help?

How do you choose the best plan for yourself and can you change your mind in the future?

What is covered under Medicare D and what is not?

**Sam Deibler**

**Director, Greenwich Commission on Aging**  
**will address this very important topic for seniors.**

**Sunday, January 22, 2006**

**8:00 to 9:00 a.m.**

**Breakfast is included. Bring your friends. All are welcome.**

**R.S.V.P. to the Church Office by January 18**  
**869-1091**

## WOMEN'S GATHERING

### **January 20: Nancy Meek**

Join us in the New Year on Friday evening, January 20, for a potluck dinner in the Parlor. We look forward to hearing from Nancy Meek and learning about her interesting life and ideas. We will honor all women with November, December, and January birthdays and they will be eligible for a small raffle. Look for our flyer in the mail and please RSVP to Lynda Treadwell at 869-1091. Remember to invite your neighbors, friends, and new church members.

### Upcoming Events:

Date	Speaker	Location
3/1	Ash Wednesday	RHCC Parlor
3/5	Rev. Shannon White	Swan Grant's
4/7	Susan Sterne	Carol Memishian's
5/19	Ella Szabo	Carrie Finlayson's

— Carrie Finlayson and Dee Lewis  
Co-Chairs, Women's Gathering

## NEW CHURCH HOME FOR CARMEL

Carmel Tinnes has accepted a position at First Presbyterian Church in Royal Oaks, Michigan, in the Detroit metropolitan area starting February 1. The church has about 850 members and a vital church school program. As the Director of Family Ministries Carmel will be responsible for the Sunday school, which serves around 50 children each Sunday. The church's programs focus on the integration of theater, music, and arts into the Bible studies, so Carmel will be able to use her creativity and background in theater arts!

During a recent house-hunting trip to Royal Oaks, Carmel was invited to stay with one of the church families for a few days and received a warm welcome from the congregation. She has also been in touch with the Mazza family, who moved from Greenwich to the Detroit area a few years ago. The Rev. Tom Rice, who is the pastor at First Presbyterian, is also well known and liked by the Mazzas, as he used to be the pastor at their Detroit church. Carmel is still looking for a house in the area. If anyone has tips or ideas, please let her know. Carmel will move to Royal Oaks immediately after the RHCC Women's Retreat in Madison, CT., which is scheduled for January 25 and 26.





## BENEVOLENCE AND OUTREACH

### RHCC Reaches Out to Family ReEntry

Family ReEntry is making impressive strides in helping to reverse the high rates of incarceration that have reached an unprecedented scale: prison populations are now 7-1/2 times per capita higher than they were for fifty years prior to 1975. Since inner city neighborhoods supply more than 65% of the incarcerated, children born to these communities face a tragic 40% chance of spending time in prison. Family ReEntry has many programs that provide clients both the hope and skills to lead a productive life.



One client, Jesse Burney, spoke movingly of his experiences at a fundraising event held at the home of Joan Warburg on September 18. Incarcerated as a teenager, he “had lost hope that his life would be anything other than a series of prison terms. That’s all I saw, all I knew. Then I met Jonathan from Family ReEntry and learned about their mentoring program. Jonathan and my mentor stuck with me and helped me build a vision of hope for my future. Now I have been promoted in my job, I am married and have a new baby son. I am so grateful to the help I have received – Family ReEntry has given me a real life.”

According to Board President Sally Schenk, “Family ReEntry is very grateful for the continuing financial support we have received from Round Hill Community Church. Without this heartfelt and generous community support for our unheralded cause, we would never have been able to reach so many so effectively. Our next step is to provide the state with solid research results, proving the efficacy of our work and thus helping to guide the state to more productive, humane, and cost effective policies.”

**Calling Anyone Interested in a Katrina/Rita Workcamp:** Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which left much of our southern coast completely devastated, have affected all of us on many levels. Shortly after they hit the Gulf Coast, the Benevolence and Outreach Committee met to discuss how we as a community might respond to one of the worst disasters our country has ever faced.

We talked about responding not only with our dollars (over \$25,000 was sent on behalf of the Round Hill Community Church to the American Red Cross) but also with our time and energy.

The committee is investigating several opportunities for people who want to physically get involved and help rebuild. One opportunity through Habitat for Humanity is called “House in a Box,” during which volunteers build frames of houses in their home areas and then ship them to the Gulf Coast.

Some, however, may need to actually go to the area. So this is an initial inquiry to see if there are people who are interested in being part of a team that would travel to Louisiana, Mississippi, or Texas as part of a work camp this spring. We would pick a week that works for everyone and go through the auspices of the Presbyterian Church, which has been working extensively in the region.

If anyone (age 15 or over) is interested in such an experience, please let me know. You may reach me at (203) 869-1091 or email me at [shannon@roundhillcommunitychurch.org](mailto:shannon@roundhillcommunitychurch.org) or [shannonjlp@aol.com](mailto:shannonjlp@aol.com).

—Shannon White

## MUSIC NOTES

### An Afternoon of Chamber Music

The Chamber Players of the Greenwich Symphony will perform at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 5, in the Sanctuary. The audience will have the opportunity to visit with the musicians at a wine and cheese reception following the concert. The program will feature a Brahms sonata for viola and piano, a Dohnanyi string trio, and the Messiaen Quartet for the End of Time. Flyers with more details are available outside the Church Office. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$5 for students and may be purchased at the door. Also, there is a group rate available at \$15 per person for groups of ten or more by special arrangement. (Please call Carrie Finlayson, Treasurer, at 869-4661.)



## RUDOLPH'S WORKSHOP

Rudolph danced the night away at the Preview Party on Friday night and then entertained both children and adults on Saturday by making balloon figures for them. Neighbors and church members came out Friday night to share in some Christmas cheer, preview and buy gifts from the many special vendors, and bid on some exceptional items during the silent auction.



The Men's Group greeted guests and quenched their thirst as they tended the bar with style and humor. Jean Bergstresser and Leigh Grant and their helpers set up and ran a beautiful and enticing Treasure Trove. Leslie Lee, Suzy Simpson, and many helpers decorated the Community House to look like a beautiful Christmas ornament. Thanks to all who made Friday such a special evening.



Saturday brought a slightly younger crowd to partake of crafts making, train rides, boutique shopping, and searching for Treasure in the Trove. So many families voiced their appreciation for such a lovely, low-key event where they could spend some time with each other and Rudolph.



So many people from our church made this day possible including Tina Pusser, Carmel Tinnes, and members of the youth groups who coordinated and ran the craft stations. Children were also invited to wrap gifts donated by the Hajaars that were distributed to Greenwich Social Services families. Mirella Hajaar spent the whole day with Santa (thank you to "you know who you are") taking pictures of him with young visitors. The Men's Group again made the train run and put many smiles on faces, young and older.



Without Lynda Treadwell, this event would not have happened. Her tireless efforts are so appreciated by the members of this church and we thank her for her dedication, guidance, creativity, and organization.





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## PASTORAL MESSAGE

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*continued from page 1*

My deep prayer for our church in 2006 is that together we may continue the “real work of Christmas” . . . and in a manner that builds up our fellowship in exciting new ways.

Blessings and Peace for a Wonderful New Year!

—Bob Culp

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## JANUARY WOMEN’S RETREAT

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Four spots are still open for the January 25 to 26 women’s retreat in the Seascape House of the Mercy Center in Madison, CT. Beth Wright and Carmel Tinnes are planning to explore the theme of prayer beads. You will learn how different cultures and traditions use these tools for prayer and meditation and go home with your own personal set! Let us know if we can reserve a space for you by calling Beth Wright at 622-6338 as soon as possible. A letter will go out in early January to those who have reserved a space with all the details of the event, including the cost.

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## CALLING ALL BOOKS, VIDEOS, CDS...

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If you have borrowed books or other materials from Carmel, please return them so that she can get organized for her upcoming move. Thank you.

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## JANUARY SERVICES AND SERMONS

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|------------|--|
| Sunday, 1  | <i>What Shall We Offer?</i> , Shannon White  |
| Sunday, 8  | <i>And God Will Be There . . .</i> , Bob Culp<br>Sacrament of Communion            |
| Sunday, 15 | <i>The Eyes and Hands of Love</i> , Shannon White<br>Sacrament of Baptism Observed |
| Sunday, 22 | <i>A Faithful Approach Toward Wintry Blues</i> ,<br>Bob Culp                       |
| Sunday, 29 | <i>Our Prodigal Longing for Home</i> , Bob Culp<br>Youth Music Sunday              |

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## JANUARY IMPORTANT DATES

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|------------|--|
| Sunday, 8  | High School Discussion Group during worship<br>Forum: Reading the Bible Again for the<br>First Time, led by Bob Culp, 11:15 a.m.                                     |
| Sunday, 15 | Bible Study led by Shannon White, 11:15 a.m.   |
| Monday, 16 | St. Luke’s Cooking, 3:00 p.m., Serving, 5:00 p.m.  |
| Tues., 17  | Rev. Keire Discussion Group, Mtg. Rm.,<br>6:30 p.m., E. Pagel’s <i>The Gnostic Gospels</i>   |
| Thurs., 19 | Sophia’s Daughters, Meeting Room, 12:30 p.m.   |
| Friday, 20 | Women’s Gathering Potluck Dinner   |
| Sunday, 22 | High School Discussion Group during worship<br>Forum: Are You Confused by Medicare D?<br>8:00 to 9:00 a.m., Meeting Room<br>Middle School Youth Group, 11:15 a.m.    |
| Wed., 25   | Forum: Sex, Drugs, Drinking, and Rock ’n’ Roll<br>Middle School Youth 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.<br>Dinner for all, 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.<br>High School Youth, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. |