

BACK FOR ANOTHER YEAR

Kernels for College fundraiser continues

By BREANNA EDELSTEIN
bedelstein@derrynews.com

LONDONDERRY — When Amaya Lessard, 14, was younger, she would pick peaches and plums from trees in her yard. After she and her sister made lemonade and iced tea, they would pull a wagon full of fresh fruit and drinks down their cul-de-sac and sell them to neighbors doing yard work. According to her mother, Ola Lessard, Amaya has always had an entrepreneurial spirit.

Now, she's a freshman in high school and back for her third year of selling popcorn and lemonade at Concerts on the Common, a free music series hosted by the Londonderry Arts Council. She calls her business Kernels for College and utilizes it as an opportunity to save money to contribute to her future tuition bill.

It's all part of her goal of becoming an obstetrician.

"I was in seventh grade and I like to think ahead, so I was thinking about college," Lessard said. "I knew it was really expensive and I thought about how I would come up with some of that



Amaya Lessard, 14, is a freshman at Londonderry High School. Three years ago she started Kernels for College, a small business that sells popcorn, soda and fresh lemonade at Concerts on the Common to help save money for college. It's never too early to start saving, she said.

NICOLE GOODHUE BOYD/Photo

money. And I like coming up with ideas for businesses."

Every Wednesday night, starting in June, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., different musical acts perform at the Londonderry town common

as part of Concerts on the Common. Though the entertainment changes each week, Lessard has become a constant there.

"The concerts have quite a following," said Julie Lee, a

member of the Arts Council. "People come and as soon as they see that Amaya is set up, they get their popcorn and lemonade cause it's part of their concert experience."

She sells a bag of popcorn

and a cup of lemonade for \$1 each and over the last two summers, she's collectively saved \$1,000.

"The money she makes is obviously not going to pay for all of her college education," her mother said. "But the experience she's getting will help her in other ways, like learning how to juggle, being a go-getter and doing things that others don't do."

Being young does not affect her business sense.

When she sat down and told her parents about the idea, they explained startup fees and how she would have to pay them back for their investment.

"She had to do a lot of research to find out what size bags to buy and how much to charge," Ola said. "She wanted to give fair prices for a family event, but not lose money while doing it."

Ola, also an entrepreneur, said she has always been honest with her daughters about what it takes to run a business.

"Last year, I paid off all

my debt for the machine and the lemonade cooler," Amaya said. "Now it's just the popcorn materials and drinks to pay for. I should be making more of a profit this summer."

Another factor to consider, this one out of her control, is the weather. If it's raining on a Wednesday night, concerts are either held in the Matthew Thornton Elementary School gymnasium or the Londonderry High School cafeteria.

"If it's raining or if there's a small crowd, she has to learn to deal with that," Ola said. "Sometimes she has a lot of homework or is tired, but she's made this commitment and is there every week. We're very proud of her."

This year, Amaya has inspired her younger cousins, who live in Washington, to start their own Kernels for College fundraiser.

She enjoys how her small business has immersed her in the community and supports her cousins who are just getting started.

"You're never too young to start saving," she said.

Community garden flourishes

Residents gather for second annual planting

By BREANNA EDELSTEIN
bedelstein@eagletribune.com

WINDHAM — Last year, in her 4-by-8-foot community garden plot, France McManus grew enough strawberries, zucchini, green beans, tomatoes and more to provide her family of five with fresh produce all summer.

In its second year, the Community Garden Program offers 20 plots, assigned on a first come, first served basis.

The town provides watering cans, gloves, seeds, plants, loam and fertilizer, all funded through donations.

Through a public-private relationship with Crossing Life Church, the plots are located on a quarter-acre of church property at 122 Lowell Road.

"We bought the land from Taylor Farm two years ago," said Stephanie Foster, the church's community outreach director. "It became our mission to honor the Taylor family and use the land as a blessing for the

town."

The church allows the town access to the land at no charge.

Community development director Laura Scott said the program has been a dream of hers for some time. The idea sprouted when she was teaching at the University of New Hampshire and advising a student on a senior project about the importance of community gardens.

"When you think of a small town, you think of gardening together, planting flowers, food and working together," Scott said. "There has been an overwhelming response to it since the beginning."

Many residents, including McManus, were impressed by the success of their gardens last year and returned for another year of participation.

She owns A Simply Wholesome Life, which sells organic, local products. She donated soil, seeds and plants to this year's community garden effort.

"To me, this experience is



Derrick McManus checks out some strawberries growing in his family's section of the Windham Community Garden. Though not all of them are red and juicy, McManus finds plenty to snack on.

BREANNA EDELSTEIN/
Staff photo

about giving kids an idea of what it's like to grow their own food," McManus said. "It's important for them to know about the whole process, from planting to plating. I just wanted to donate so more people could experience that."

A few weeks ago, gardeners gathered to plant.

"It's a great opportunity for people to come together and do something that's fun," Scott said. "And it's no pressure. You can come and go as you please."

McManus, her husband and three children spend time weeding and watering their garden every day.

"You just have to put in time and effort," she said, "and the garden really flourishes."

Richard Parow is also a seasoned gardener. With 40 years of gardening experience and five years

volunteering with the Shepherd's Pantry, he utilizes the community garden to connect the two.

He has the biggest piece of land in the garden, two 4-by-8-foot plots and four rows. He donates everything he grows to the food pantry.

"Last year, a couple people helped me to maintain the garden," Parow said. "And, this year, there's a couple more who want to get involved with it."

He planted peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, beans, lettuce and pumpkins last year.

"With cherry tomatoes and everything, it got hard to keep an accurate count of how much we were donating," he said. "But it was a good amount of fresh produce."

He said he hopes soil improvements and better access to water make the

pantry's plot even more productive this year.

Last year, rain buckets and a spigot on the side of the church were the main water sources. Some people chose to bring their own water. Parow said he will reach out to the fire department to see if they can help.

The community garden involves many more people than just those who sign up for plots, he said.

Lake Street Garden in Salem is donating 28 tomato plants, the Windham Garden Club is donating tomato and pepper plants, and Parow is working with someone who can provide manure and more soil.

Though plans are not definite, Scott said she would like to host a midsummer social event where gardeners can meet up and discuss an October harvest festival to end the season.

Londonderry students add up to math success

LONDONDERRY — Londonderry Middle School students participated in the New England Math League contest in February and students recently received certificates for their achievements.

The following results were tallied for each grade level:

Sixth grade: The school was ranked 11th in New England and second in New Hampshire. The top five students on the sixth-grade team were Adam Vogler, Noah Sekula, Ben Steele, Luc Lafond, Shiva Ganapathy and Ryan Griffin.

Seventh grade: The middle school ranked 23rd in New England and tied for third place in New Hampshire in this age group. The top five seventh-graders were Courtney Shay, Cassidy Williams, Kerry Daley, Timothy Gore, Lorenzo Inglese, Jack Anderson, Griffin Miville and Benjamin Robbins.

Eighth grade: Londonderry Middle School was ranked 24th in New England and third in the state for this age group. The eighth-grade team consisted of Zack Chau, Hannah Brown, William Garvey, James Fitzgibbons, Alyssa Jarvis and Derik Pignone.

Lawrence General nurses, doctors ride for ALS

By LISA KASHINSKY
lkashinsky@eagletribune.com

LAWRENCE — After finding out a co-worker was diagnosed with ALS, four Lawrence General Hospital medical personnel decided to band together and raise awareness for the disease.

Nurses Marianne Gaffney and Stephen Callery teamed up with doctors Glenn Newsome and Lawrence Casha to participate in the Tri-State Trek, a three-day, 270-mile bike ride that kicks off June 26 to raise money for ALS research. Their team, TeamTon, is hoping to raise \$8,000.

"It's almost like a family member has become ill with it," Newsome said. "For me it had a pretty significant and powerful impact on the way I look at that disease and I wanted to try and do something about it."

ALS, or Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, is a disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord and leads to the inability to control muscle movement.

A person is diagnosed with ALS — also known as Lou Gehrig's disease — every 90 seconds. Life expectancy after first signs of the disease is about two to five years, though about 10 percent of those with ALS can live for more than 10 years after diagnosis, according to the ALS

Therapy Development Institute's website. The Cambridge-based ALS institute benefits from the bike ride fundraiser.

After learning of their co-worker's diagnosis, Gaffney said she wanted to do something that would bring a positive note to a negative situation. Callery and Casha said they wanted to increase awareness about the disease.

Working in critical care, the four members of TeamTon have seen firsthand

what ALS looks like in its end stages.

"It causes muscle weakness, difficulty breathing, swallowing, and paralysis. It leaves your senses intact and that's cruel," Gaffney said.

Newsome — who, like Casha, also works at other area hospitals — said he'd like to see progress made on combating the disease.

"I think we all wanted to sort of do something to help people upstream, help researchers find a way to reverse the course instead

of waiting for the weakness to come on," Newsome said.

The ride

Money raised from the ALS bike ride benefits the ALS Therapy Development Institute, which strives to research, develop and discover treatments for the disease.

The Tri-State Trek starts at Boston College in Newton on June 26 and ends in Greenwich, Conn., on June 28, spanning 270 miles.

The members of TeamTon came into the training process with varying levels of experience. Casha, an Andover resident, has been

a cyclist for around 40 years. Fellow Andover resident Newsome has done charity bike rides before, including the Pan-Mass Challenge. Gaffney, of Pelham, N.H., has done triathlons. Lawrence resident Callery, on the other hand, had to buy a bike for the ALS ride.

NEW ENGLAND'S FAVORITE
WEATHERVANE
SEAFOOD RESTAURANT
Serving from 11am
Fathers Day
Sunday June 21st
WeatherVane
Gift Cards
Always a Perfect Fit!

Wicked Cheap Twin Lobsters \$21.95
Thursday-Sunday, Fathers Day Weekend
Only While Supplies Last*

\$5 HOUSE MARGARITAS ON THE ROCKS Every Day All Day

*Special \$21.95 pricing not valid at WeatherVane's Lobster in the Rough on Badgers Island or Weirs Beach

So. Broadway, Rte 28, Salem • 603-893-6269

ATTENTION HAVERHILL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

Do not dispose of thermostats, thermometers or fluorescent lighting. These products contain mercury which can be harmful if not managed properly.

MERCURY PRODUCTS COLLECTION

Thursday, June 25, 2015, 8 am-1 pm
Haverhill Drop Off Center (Behind DPW Garage)
HAVERHILL DPW
500 Primrose Street, Haverhill, MA

Sponsored by:
COVANTA ENERGY
www.keepmercuryfromrising.org

Exchange your Glass Mercury Fever Thermometer for a NEW Digital Thermometer!

***** FREE *****
RECYCLING

Additional items include:
Elemental Mercury, Barometers, Blood Pressure Units, Flow Meters, Cooking Thermometers and Mercury Switches

Fluorescent Lamps

Business Owners
36 bulbs or more
50% reimbursement
Call Dan Harty
978-241-3002

Thermostats