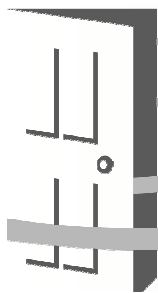


February 2011 / March 2011



Kalamazoo Wraps News

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH COLLABORATION

Kalamazoo System of Care Community begins intensive planning for its 6th Annual

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Carnival!

The Carnival Planning Committee is in full swing in anticipation of this year's Carnival to be held from 4-7 pm, on Thursday, May 5, 2011, at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds.

Over 1500 people came together to celebrate children's mental health in May of 2010.

JOIN US!

- ◆ Show your support for youth and families in Kalamazoo.
- ◆ Help raise awareness regarding mental health issues for youth.
- ◆ Share information about your organization or business that serves youth and families.
- ◆ Reach out to hundreds of Kalamazoo County community members in just a few short hours.

Contact Renee Huff at 269-553-8123.

Pictured below: Games on the lawn during 2010's Carnival.



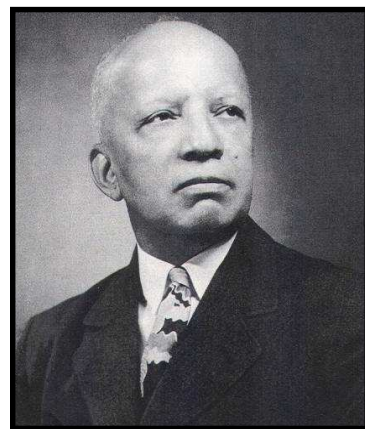
February Is Black History Month

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the son of former slaves, is credited with today's celebration of Black History Month.

The observance evolved from "Negro History Week," established by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1926.

From his humble beginnings, Woodson went on to earn a Ph. D from Harvard.

Check out this edition of the Kalamazoo Wraps News for other interesting facts regarding the creation of Black History Month and details of Kalamazoo celebrations at branches of the Kalamazoo Public Library and the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.



Dr. Carter G. Woodson

March Is National Reading Month

The Kalamazoo Public Library's (KPL) "Reading Together" program builds community by reading and discussing the same book throughout the city.

KPL's current Reading Together selection features Tracy Kidder's "Strength In What Remains", an inspiring account of one man's remarkable journey after surviving civil war and genocide in Burundi, Africa.

– It's been called a brilliant testament to the power of will and of second chances. Contact KPL for Reading Together events in March. (See page 4 for more information about KPL.)



Kalamazoo Public Library's Central Library at 315 S Rose St., Kalamazoo.

FUN FACT: In addition to being National Reading Month, March is also the designated month to honor: Poetry, the Red Cross, Social Workers, Women's History, Peanuts, Poetry, Nutrition, Irish American's, and Irish American Heritage.



Parent Advisory Group

I'd like to say Happy New Year to all and thank you for the support provided to keep the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) thriving in 2010. As we wrap up the old and bring in the new, PAG is evaluating its progress and setting new goals for 2011.

We have participated in Leadership Training and are moving forward in using the skills we have learned. PAG members are joining, and participating, on more community committees and workgroups to be better informed about community services and how they operate. This will help PAG members to better advise our community partners in their endeavors to change the system of care to work even more efficiently with the families it serves.

I'd also like to thank the PAG members for working so hard to learn more about Kalamazoo's very large system of care and help tackle the tasks put before them. I appreciate the willingness to continue even when it seems as if there is no end to the work we're doing. It is their valuable expertise and knowledge that will continue to drive our community's system of care forward.

So I lift my glass to you and look forward to continuing this journey together. Thanks to all of you who have participated at booths, trainings, conferences, panels, and picnics. We could not have done it without you.

This year PAG will be looking forward to visits from our community partners to share information and continue building even stronger relationships.

Service providers of Kalamazoo, we look forward to having you at our table and being of service to you. Welcome.

Peace be with you all. - Jackie Mitchell, PAG Member

To learn more about the Parent Advisory Group, please contact Kathy Howard, Kalamazoo Wraps' Co-Project Director, at Advocacy Services for Kids, at 269-343-5896.

**Now you can find current news from PAG on
Facebook!**

**The group name is:
"Kalamazoo Parent Advisory Group".**

You Know February Is Black History Month, But Did You Know...

Recognition of black history originated in 1926 by historian Carter G. Woodson as "Negro History Week". It was later celebrated as Black History Month. Woodson chose the second week of February because it marked the birthdays of two Americans who greatly influenced the lives and social condition of African Americans: former President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass.

Until the study of black history, blacks were absent from history books. Carter G. Woodson established the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. "Negro History Week" was intended to bring national attention to black people's contributions throughout history.

Other important dates in February that align with a study of black history are:

- 2/23/1868 - W.E.B. DuBois was born - civil rights leader and co-founder of the NAACP.
- 2/03/1870 - The 15th Amendment was passed - allowing black men to vote.
- 2/25/1870 - The first black U.S. senator, Hiram Revels, took office.
- 2/12/1909 - The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was founded.

IN THIS ISSUE:

PARENT ADVISORY GROUP...	2
CALLING ALL YOUTH...	3
COMMUNITY EVENTS...	4
EVALUATION...	5
CULTURAL & LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE...	6
FUN FOR FAMILIES IN KALAMAZOO...	7

The Lives Of Their Families So That They Have The Opportunity To Reach Their Full Potential.

Calling All Youth

From Youth Leadership to Youth Employment

Congratulations to former Calling All Youth (CAY) member Amanda Bryant for recently being hired as a Teen Race Exhibit Facilitator at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum!

The interactive travelling exhibition, *RACE: Are We So Different?*, helps visitors understand the complex dynamics of one of America's most sensitive topics - race. As a community, we have been preparing for the arrival of this exhibit for months and now the time is finally here!

Amanda's role as a Teen Facilitator is to connect with groups of youth who view the exhibit and assist them in a discussion afterwards.

Members of Kalamazoo Wraps' youth advisory group, Calling All Youth (CAY), visited the exhibit in December and had endless amounts of positive feedback about the exhibit. They were excited to see Amanda in her new role. As coordinators and facilitators of CAY, Deondra & I were tickled to see her apply some of things she learned from CAY into the context of her new role.

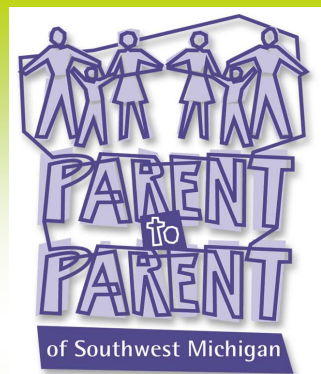
"CAY helped prepare me for what comes next," Amanda said, reflecting back on her year and a half with CAY. "It helped me realize that it's not enough to sit around and complain about things—we actually have to go out and speak up in order for things to change."

We are thrilled for this opportunity to acknowledge Amanda's hard work and hope that you too will join us in doing so. It's important to celebrate the successes of our youth and continue to support their growth any way that we can. CAY members are between the ages of 11 and 17. We look forward to watching other members of CAY grow up and move onto even bigger and better things.

For more information about Calling All Youth, please contact Mackenzie Hunter, Kalamazoo Wraps' Youth Involvement Coordinator at Advocacy Services for Kids (ASK) at mackenzieh@askforkids.org or 269-343-5896.



**Recreation Expo
Saturday, March 5, 2011
10 am – 2pm
WoodsEdge Learning Center
1501 E. Milham Avenue
Portage, MI 49002**



Here comes summer! Don't miss the ball; be the star player and make plans for your child's summer activities early.

Run to the 9th Annual All Kids Can! Recreation Expo to see what area camps and recreation programs have to offer for fun and fitness programs, designed for kids of all ages and abilities. Admission to the Recreation Expo is FREE! Door Prizes and Scholarships will be given away!

Community Events

Kalamazoo Wraps and Advocacy Services for Kids Present:

A Little Bit Deaf:

An Introduction to Working with the Deaf Community

With Mary Beth Mapes

Tuesday, March 8th and Tuesday, March 15th

11:15 Sign in and Registration

11:30—1:00 PM Training

KCMHSAS Services for Youth and Families

(432 West Crosstown Parkway Conference Room)

Contact Rebecca Clore with questions or to request registration information at 553-8081 or by e-mail at rclore@kazoozcmh.org

A Little Bit Deaf is a two-part training. Please plan on attending both sessions to receive training credit and Social Work CE credit. This course is pending approval for 3 Social Work CE's.

Agenda—March 8th

11:15—11:30 AM

Sign In and Registration

11:30—1:00 PM

History of Deaf Culture

Deaf Etiquette

Learning Signs

DVD: Through Deaf Eyes

Questions and Answers

Agenda—March 15th

11:15—11:30 AM

Sign In and Registration

11:30—1:00 PM

Review of History and Etiquette

Discussion of Famous Deaf Individuals

Review and Learning New Signs

DVD: Through Deaf Eyes & Discussion

Wrap Up and Evaluations

FUN and AFORDABLE Activities for You and Your Family at the Kalamazoo Public Library

The Kalamazoo Public Library (KPL) offers free books, movies, music, video games, public computers, WiFi Internet Access, educational classes and more. Monthly calendars highlight a vast array of fun and free activities for Kalamazoo's families.

There's something for everyone from newborns to toddlers, kids, tweens, teens and adults. KPL makes selecting age appropriate books, music, movies and activities easy for parents, by offering helpful guides.

Beyond the items available for check-out, many activities and services are offered at the library including storytime group reading, basic computer classes and live music concerts - all FREE.

(Continued on page 7.)

Celebrate Black History Month with your family at the Powell Library on Tuesday, February 22, 2011. Sid Ellis, of the Black Arts & Cultural Center, will host a program of puppetry and story telling.

The Air Zoo's Family-Friendly Attractions Offer Year-Round, Indoor Fun for All

Voted the "Best Place to Take Out-of-Towners" and "Best Place to Spend a Day with Your Family," the Air Zoo features amusement park-style rides, full-motion flight simulators, 4-D Missions Theater, as well as more than 30 rare aircraft, plus exhibits and educational activities.

Kalamazoo Air Zoo is located at 6151 Portage Road, Portage, MI 49002 Phone: 269-382-6555 or 866-524-7966 (Toll Free)

FREE general admission includes entrance to the Main Campus, including:

- ◆ Guadalcanal Memorial Museum
- ◆ Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame
- ◆ More than 30 rare and historic aircraft
- ◆ Historic artifacts
- ◆ Interactive kiosks

Unlimited Ride Packages and tickets are available for purchase to enjoy our amusement park-style rides and attractions including:

- ◆ Montgolfier Balloon Ride
- ◆ 4-D Missions Theater
- ◆ Flying Circus Bi-Plane Ride
- ◆ 3-D Space Shuttle
- ◆ Full Motion Flight Simulators

Best Value! Ultimate Ace Package - \$12.95 48" or taller

Includes:

- ◆ Montgolfier Balloon Race
- ◆ 4-D Missions Theater
- ◆ Flying Circus Bi-Plane Ride
- ◆ 3-D Space Shuttle
- ◆ Full-Motion Flight Simulators

Junior Flyer Package - \$10.95 42" or taller

Includes:

- ◆ Montgolfier Balloon Race
- ◆ 4-D Missions Theater
- ◆ Flying Circus Bi-Plane Ride
- ◆ 3-D Space Shuttle

Co-Pilot Package - \$6.95 36" or taller

Includes:

- ◆ Montgolfier Balloon Race
- ◆ 4-D Missions Theater
- ◆ Flying Circus Bi-Plane Ride

Children 2 and under are free

Evaluation Team Changes

It's a new year with some new changes to the Evaluation Team staff.

For the past four years, Carolyn Sullins has performed as Lead Evaluator for Kalamazoo Wraps and has overseen its Longitudinal Study. Because the Longitudinal Study of the Kalamazoo Wraps initiative will be completed this September, Carolyn has accepted a new position as a Senior Research Associate with James Bell Associates. She will be evaluating a variety of programs in the child welfare and family services field. Carolyn has been a wonderful team member and an excellent Lead Evaluator for Kalamazoo Wraps. We appreciate her dedication and hard work and are very happy she will continue to be a consultant for the Kalamazoo Wraps Evaluation Team.

Brandy Pratt has accepted the position of Lead Evaluator for the remainder of the Longitudinal Study. Brandy came aboard the Evaluation Team last summer and worked directly with Carolyn to assist with the administrative side of the evaluation. Ms. Pratt's professional experience ranges from advancing science policy initiatives on Capitol Hill for the American Association for the Advancement of Science to a youth development consultant for behavioral pediatrics practitioners. Additionally, she holds prior experience as Director of Programs for Facilitating Leadership in Youth; a Washington D.C. based youth development nonprofit organization where she developed and implemented youth development trainings and supervised multiple youth led community initiatives.

We are also delighted that Syprose Owiti has been promoted to our full-time Research Assistant for the evaluation! Syprose is involved in, and oversees, the Kalamazoo Wraps data collection, management, analysis, reporting, she also communicates and responds to client inquiries and requests. In addition, she assists in the preparation of grant and contract proposals. Over the past few years, Syprose has been a central figure with our families and we are happy to see her rewarded for her diligent work.

We look forward to a great 2011! - Ladel Lewis, Syprose Owiti, Brandy Pratt, and Becca Sanders.

If you would like to learn more about the Kalamazoo Wraps Evaluation Team, please contact Becca Sanders at beccaanddan@gorge.net. Check out our most recent reports at www.kalamazoowrapsevaluation.org

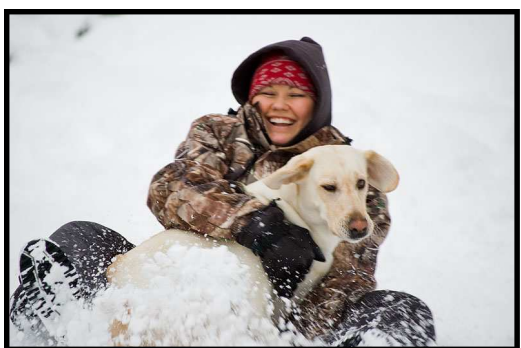
Cultural & Linguistic Competence

SAMHSA Staff Work With System of Care Partners To Address the Needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth and Their Families

Kalamazoo Wraps' Cultural and Linguistic Competency Workgroup has been asked by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to work on developing materials on how System of Care partners can increase support for at-risk Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) youth and their families.

In 2009 Kalamazoo Wraps co-sponsored two days of workshops with Dr. Caitlin Ryan of San Francisco State University. Dr. Ryan is the Director of the Family Acceptance Project, which is a research-based project that shows families how to support their GLBT children in ways that lower their risk for suicide, drug abuse and HIV.

In October 2010, several members of the Kalamazoo planning group that brought Dr. Ryan to Kalamazoo in 2009, presented a workshop entitled "What's Love Got to Do With It?" at the annual statewide System of Care Conference held in Lansing Michigan.



This local planning group, known as the Family Acceptance of Children and Teens (FACT) collaboration, offers educational outreach to help professionals, family members and interested citizens learn ways to support GLBT young people. FACT shares information from the research of Dr. Ryan and offers concrete suggestions for how anyone can help youth who are "coming out" to live healthier and safer lives.

Kalamazoo was the first System of Care community to invite Dr. Ryan to share her internationally known research on how to best help families support their gay and transgender children.

More recently, Gary Blau, Sylvia Fisher and Jeff Poirier of SAMHSA, have begun working with Dr. Ryan on a publication that will offer specific suggestions for how System of Care communities can effectively address the needs of these youth.

Kalamazoo has been invited to share information about our local initiative to help gay and transgender youth and their families.

Sharon Roepke of the Kalamazoo Wraps has been interviewed about our perception of the needs of GLBT youth in residential care and to contribute to a chapter of specific examples of how Systems of Care can begin addressing the needs of these young people.

The Kalamazoo Wraps Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC) Workgroup is committed to supporting at-risk youth and is available to coach individuals or organizations who would like additional information on how to best support GLBT young people.

If you have questions about how to improve your support for GLBT youth, or to participate in FACT, you are welcome to contact Sharon Roepke, Cultural & Linguistic Competency Coordinator for Kalamazoo Wraps, at 269-553-8110 or at sroepke@kazoocmh.org.

If you're interested in volunteering or learning more about the work of the Cultural and Linguistic Competency Workgroup, please contact Sharon Roepke at 269-720-8738 or sroepke@kazoocmh.org.

Si estás interesado en ser voluntario o aprender más sobre la labor de la Competencia Cultural y Lingüística de grupo de trabajo, por favor contactar con Sharon Roepke en 269-720-8738 o sroepke@kazoocmh.org.



Celebrate Black History Month at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum will commemorate Black History Month by offering a free film series that recognizes and celebrates the achievements of 20th century African-American writers, dancers, painters, actors, musicians, and other artists who changed the United States as a nation and as a culture.

Each Sunday in February one of the six segments of the PBS series, "I'll Make Me a World," airs in the Mary Jane Stryker Theater at 3 p.m. Each film will be introduced by a guest host from the arts and academic communities. They will lead a short discussion following each film.

The series begins Sunday, Feb. 3, with "Lift Every Voice," covering the years 1900 to 1920. Dr. Romeo Philips, retired professor emeritus of music and education at Kalamazoo College and a former member of the Portage City Council, will host. This segment covers the trials and triumphs of the first generation of African-Americans born into freedom: vaudeville stars, represented by Bert Williams and George Walker, and the creators of jazz, America's original music. Oscar Micheaux is highlighted as the producer of motion pictures that depict the complexities of black life during a time of racial segregation and conflict.

The Sunday, Feb. 10, attraction will be "Without Fear or Shame," covering the years 1920 to 1937. Focusing on the creative movement known as the Harlem Renaissance, the program highlights poets Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, as well as female blues singers. This segment is hosted by historian Michelle Johnson, who is a Zora Neale Hurston scholar.

"Bright Like the Sun" is the offering for Sunday, Feb. 17, and covers the years from 1935 to 1954. This segment depicts how Paul Robeson, the legendary singer and star of stage and screen, used his artistry and fame to fight for social justice in the United States and abroad. A Harlem art school and the birth of bebop and "cool" jazz are also covered. Soprano Alfrelyn Roberts will host this segment.

The final showing on Sunday, Feb. 24, will be "The Freedom You Will Take," covering the years 1985 to the present. In this segment, transformation of the contemporary cultural landscape by the power of African-American film, performance, rap music, and spoken word is explored. Denise Miller, poet and KVCC instructor of English and African-American literature, will host.

The Museum is handicapped accessible. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Many programs and events are free; check individual program descriptions for fees.

Museum hours are: Mondays - Thursdays: 9 am - 5 pm, Fridays: 9 am - 9 pm, Saturdays: 9 am - 5 pm, Sundays and Holidays: 1-5 pm, (Closed on Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day).

You can contact museum staff at: museumstaff@kvcc.edu and/or 269-373-7990 (Museum Main Line), 800-772-3370 (Museum Main Line), 269-373-7989 (Museum Recorded Information Line) TDD #: 269-373-7982.



The Kalamazoo Valley Museum at 230 North Rose Street, Kalamazoo.

(Continued from page 4.) FUN and AFORDABLE Activities for You and Your Family at the Kalamazoo Public Library

The Law Library, in partnership with the Kalamazoo County Bar Association, offers a free Monthly Legal Clinic at KPL, for low to moderate income persons. Sessions are 20 minutes in length and allow an individual to consult one-on-one with an attorney at no cost*. (Phone 269-553-7920 for appointments. *Please note: the clinic does not include free follow-up consultations and the attorneys will not represent the person in court.)

KPL also hosts a free basic tax preparation service for individuals/families with 2010 household income under \$49,000. IRS-certified volunteers from VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) prepare the taxes. The library is a member of the Kalamazoo County Tax Counseling Initiative, which sponsors the tax preparation service. (By appointment only, at KPL. Call [2-1-1/HELP Line](tel:269-373-7989) (dial 211 or 381-HELP) to sign up.)

There's even a LEGO club that meets at the library! (For ages 5-10 years, call the Children's Room for more info 553-7804.)

KPL has so much to offer! There are five locations, including a Central Library and four neighborhood branches.

To explore what the library has for you, go to www.kpl.gov or visit the Kalamazoo Public Library's Central Library at 315 S Rose St, Kalamazoo MI 49007. Phone 269-342-9837.

Advocacy Services for Kids
414 E. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**The Family Resource Center for
KALAMAZOO WRAPS**

*Share
Information
with Parents
and Youth!*

**Kalamazoo System of Care Community's 6th Annual
National Children's Mental Health
Awareness Day Carnival!**

*Support
Youth and
Families in
Kalamazoo!*

4-7 pm, Thursday, May 5, 2011

Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds, 2900 Lake Street

**Last year, over 1500 community members came together to celebrate
children's mental health in Kalamazoo...**JOIN US!****

**Show your support for youth and families in Kalamazoo.
Contact Renee Huff at 269-553-8123 to help raise awareness of
mental health issues for youth, and share information about your
business or organization that serves youth and families.**