“How can we make this happen?” is a reoccurring question at the Sara Holbrook Community Center. Inevitably, the solution rests with connections – to other service providers, to funders and long-time supporters, to individual volunteers and community service groups. Collaboration, partnerships and good old-fashioned teamwork allow us to reach outside of the parameters of our slender resources. It brings to mind the cliché, “two heads are better than one”.

Looking back on the past two years at the Center, much has happened...

- welcoming the New North End Youth Center
- partnering with Champlain Valley Head Start to expand services to pre-schoolers and their families
- working with King Street Youth Center staff to try to expand teen programming
- collaborating with the Burlington School District to provide after-school programming and English-as-a-Second Language summer school
- working with the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf to maximize food resources to meet holiday needs...

I continue to be amazed at the dedication of a variety of individuals, committed to the provision of quality youth and family services.

We have agencies and schools in this community staffed by folks that have devoted their entire careers to working with children. There are board members of agencies who have worked tirelessly for 20 or 30 years, raising money to keep the doors open. Individuals, families and community service groups volunteer on a regular basis to help develop and keep innovative programs operating. Vermont is grounded in a solid tradition of giving in a myriad of ways; no where is that better exemplified than at the Sara Holbrook Community Center.

I thank each and every one of you for your contribution to our community.
So Long, Farewell...

After 17 years, Susan Sharp said farewell to the Sara Holbrook Community Center. In 1987, Susan began her role as Pre-School Director at the Center; her passion for teaching and love for children made our preschool famous!

In late May, friends and families of the preschool gathered to celebrate Susan’s retirement. There were balloons, streamers, flowers, all kinds of goodies, and many familiar yet grown up faces. Over a decade later, students returned to say hello and good-bye. Just a quick glance around the room filled you with a genuine feeling of community; many faces, young and old, united for one reason—Mrs. Sharp.

Susan is looking forward to retirement, allowing her more time with loved ones, especially her grandchildren.

The Sara Holbrook Center has been incredibly fortunate to have had such a dedicated and talented teacher. Susan, thank you and we miss you!

Hello Judy!

This fall we welcome Judy Cross to the Sara Holbrook Center; Judy is our new Pre-School Director. She has had much experience teaching young children. Most recently, she was the Pre-school Director at Green Mountain Shalom pre-school in Burlington.

Interestingly, Judy grew up in Burlington and attended local schools. She now lives in Underhill with her husband Joe, where they raised their two, now adult, children. Judy has enjoyed this summer, relaxing with family and friends, tending her garden, and being outdoors as much as possible. She is looking forward to joining the Sara Holbrook Pre-school this fall!
Pop Quiz

The Sara Holbrook Community Center (SHCC) has been meeting the needs of the neighborhood for 67 years. During this time, a lot has happened—programs have evolved, our location has changed, and we’ve grown. Below is a little quiz to test your SHCC knowledge. Good luck!

1. Sara Holbrook, the founder of the Center, was a:
   A. Nurse
   B. Psychologist
   C. Actress
   D. Dentist

2. The Sara Holbrook Community Center was originally located:
   A. Cherry Street
   B. Battery Street
   C. Church Street
   D. None of the Above

3. Sara Holbrook Teen Programming serves about ___________ teens a year.
   A. 265
   B. 300
   C. 425
   D. 500

4. The Sara Holbrook Community Center serves over 5,000 people a year, thanks to the help of more than 800 volunteers.
   A. True
   B. False

5. Mary Ann Blaisdell, a SHCC Board member, won United Way’s Hometown Hero Award last year for her work with:
   A. heirloom tomato plants
   B. teaching English to newly arrived children
   C. collecting water samples for the EPA
   D. All the above

6. One the Center’s most special employees has worked at the Center for _______ years.
   A. 19
   B. 28
   C. 36
   D. 41

7. The New North End Youth Center joined the Sara Holbrook Community Center in:
   A. 2001
   B. 2002
   C. 2003
   D. 2004

Answers:
Spotlight On Casey

Casey Sexton has worked at the Sara Holbrook Community Center for over two years through the University of Vermont work-study program. Casey’s role began in the after-school program, but has expanded to the teen program as well.

Casey has been a tremendous asset to the Center. Linda Hamlin, the After-School Director, described Casey: “She is a great employee-on-time, dependable, responsible, and is always comfortable leading projects with the kids. Casey is a real buddy for the kids.”

This summer Casey was a summer camp counselor and a teacher’s aide in the New Arrivals program. For New Arrivals, Casey worked primarily with the preschoolers, reinforcing English skills with the little ones.

We asked Casey to reflect on her time here and this is what she shared with us:

“A few weeks into my first semester at the University of Vermont, I began looking for a work-study job. I stumbled across a flyer offering work-study positions at the Sara Holbrook Community Center. At this point, most of my friends had found desk jobs, but I knew that I’d have a hard time sitting in one place, watching the minutes slowly tick by. I had some experience working with children before in summer camps and through church groups, so I knew that things would be at the speed I needed. I never realized how rewarding this job would actually be.

My first year at the Center was wonderful. I worked mostly in the after-school program and occasionally in the teen program. Three days a week from 2:00pm to 5:00pm, I was with the kids after-school. No matter how much homework, or studying I had to do, I always seemed to forget about it for just those few hours. Playing dodge-ball, painting watercolors, dancing to Aretha Franklin’s “Respect”, and sharing a snack with the kids were all more important. Some of the best times were on the field trips during February and April vacations. We went rock climbing, ice skating, to Frog Hollow for a pottery session, and on a factory tour at Ben and Jerry’s. Overall, it was just awesome to see the kids having so much fun!

My first year at the Center introduced me to some of the most caring and hardworking people I have ever met. This job is more than just a job for the staff at

the Center. It is amazing to see just what a handful of people can do for such a large community. I also learned a lot about the opportunities and services available in Burlington. I couldn’t wait to come back for my sophomore year of college. I didn’t think twice about looking for another job.

This was my first summer working at the Center, and it has absolutely been my favorite summer job thus far. Along with the noon to five summer camp, I have been a teacher’s assistant in the New Arrivals Program. For four weeks, I have worked with ESL children, helping them learn and maintain English skills. Before I started, I was quite nervous because I had never really dealt with language or cultural barriers before. Being a Cultural Anthropology major, I figured that now and here would be a good place to start. It has been fascinating to see the children acquire English skills and American behaviors in only a few weeks. What has amazed me is their stories, from refugee camps to Vermont.

I can’t really put into words how remarkable the Sara Holbrook Community Center is. Every time I turn around they seem to be doing something else for the community, or I learn something new about activities they have done in the past. This fall, I will be starting my third year as a work-study student at the Center and again I am looking forward to it!”

Casey gets “sneak attacked” by some summer campers at North Beach. Casey was a camp counselor this year.
Teens’ Turn

This past year, the Teen Program initiated a special program, Ladies Night Out. One night a week was dedicated to a group of young women. This focus group created a special place and time for young women to explore issues like self-esteem, body image, healthy relationships, and personal issues. Fun, new activities were a key component to the program as well. For instance, a belly dancing workshop was a means to create an open dialogue about body image. Two participants, Alma and Cheyenne, put their thoughts down on paper:

“This year all the girls had a special night, every Tuesday. It was called Ladies Night Out. We had to agree on what we did together, so it was fair. Some of the things we did were rock climbing, ice skating, swimming, mini-golf, movies, and more. We had a great time and it was all girls so it was fun. When we got into a fight, we talked through them. We talked about our problems and what has happened to each of us in our lives. Our favorite thing to do was go ice skating and drink hot chocolate with all our friends. We also had special guests come in and talk about healthy relationships. We had a guest come in and show us how to belly dance and it was awesome!”

New Arrivals

During the month of July, the Sara Holbrook Center held its New Arrivals Program; this summer was the program’s 15th year! For four weeks, pre-schoolers to middle-schoolers developed and maintained English language skills. By combining literacy, mathematics, drama, community outings and the arts, the program is comprehensive and engaging. This summer 60 children attended, representing 17 countries, such as the Congo, Vietnam, China, Russia, India, Kenya, and Tibet.

The encompassing theme this summer was Bridging with Books. Classes explored books through an author’s study. For instance, young readers read several of Eric Carle’s books; together they explored the concept of theme, looking for similarities and differences.

Again this summer, the Fletcher Free Library came once a week to listen to the young readers share the stories they had been reading. At the end of the program, Telling Tales t-shirts were given to the kids.

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers and community supporters who helped make this summer’s program a success!

In-Kind Donation Needs for After-School and Summer Camp

- Drink mixes
- Snacks for after-schoolers
- Bathing suits for girls and boys (unused preferred)
- Beach towels
- Board games for ages 5 and up
- Markers

Art is an important part to New Arrivals.
Thank You!

Our programs are made possible thanks to the generous support of the community. The following individuals, corporations, and foundations have contributed to our success.

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If your name was inadvertently omitted, please inform Leisa at 862-0080.
The Business Section

Income Sources: FY 2003-2004

- Contributions: $8,890.00
- Solicited Contributions: $9,658.67
- Challenge Grant: $35,775.00
- United Way Contributions: $93,341.87
- Holiday Appeal: $15,663.58
- Special Events Income: $3,692.81
- Grants: $206,023.41
- Program Service Fees: $30,297.99
- Investment Income: $2,433.64
- Rental Income: $1,940.00
- Miscellaneous Income: $8,434.16
- Total Income: $416,151.13

Graph Key
This spring, UVM basketball stars gave some pointers and played some hoops with the after-school program.

Here we are at the Kids Day Parade! We transformed our horse pulled wagon into the Sara Holbrook Schooner for the parade.

He’s ready for his close-up. Say Cheese!