

club business quarterly

Winter 2008-09

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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF THE WAUSAU AREA**

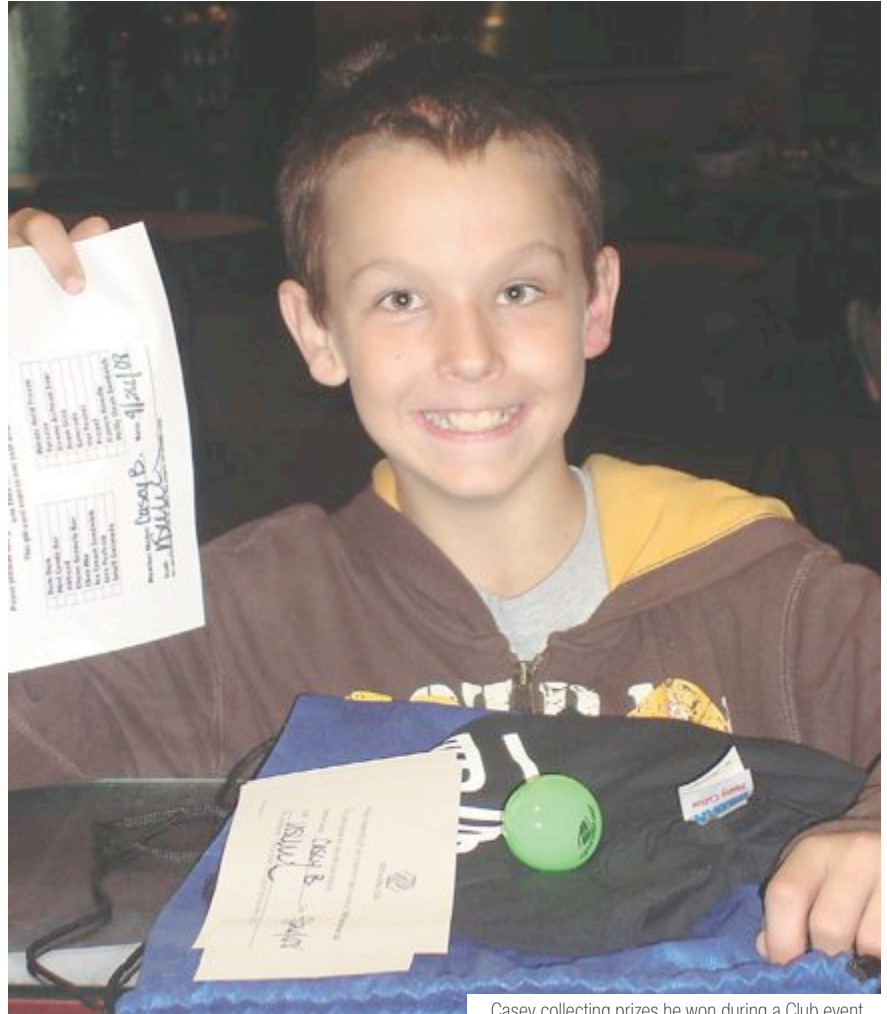
Keeping up with their lives

How Casey got his groove back after an accident

Casey was a fifth grader at GD Jones Elementary School when his older brother, Justin, brought him to the Club for the first time. "I thought he was pulling my leg. There was no way this place had an underground skate park." But Justin wasn't playing a joke on him and Casey was amazed. He also remembers the first time he walked into the games room. "There were a whole bunch of games I knew how to play, and some I didn't!"

As the youngest of three boys, Casey learned how to skate from the older two — skating was what the brothers did, and at the Club, they found a place to do it together. Casey remembers the first time he learned to "drop-in" on the ramp and how exciting it was.

Casey started skating the summer between fourth and fifth grades and he fell in love with the sport. He wanted to be a professional skater as an adult, but that is no longer possible. In July 2008, while on a family vacation in Tennessee, Casey and his brothers were skating at an outdoor skate park when an adult skater's knee slammed into Casey's face breaking the bones in his skull. He remembers his oldest brother, Josh, pulling him off the ramp to get him out of the way, the ambulance ride to the hospital, and that he was rushed to the critical care unit in both Tennessee and at St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield. Casey and his family learned that the protection between his brain and his skull is no longer there. If he gets hit in the head, he will die.



Casey collecting prizes he won during a Club event

His life has changed forever. Casey can never skate again. He cannot run, or play hard, or get sweaty with his friends in a game of dodgeball. He can't even go in the gym and won't go in the skate park, even just to watch, because it's "too hard." Casey's reality is very stark. His doctor told him, in Casey's own words, "If my nose starts leaking clear stuff, it means there is a passage to my brain."

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SAVE the DATE

Wine, Cheese & all that Jazz

Friday, Jan. 30, 2009, 8-11 pm
Jefferson Street Inn

Winemaker's Dinner

Friday, Feb. 6, 2009, 6:30 pm
Back When Café

Be sure to make your year-end gift to
the Boys & Girls Club by December 31, 2008.
Do an online donation
at www.bgclub.com!

For tickets call Maggie at (715) 845-2582 ext. 207

volunteer/donor highlights

Tell others about our (and your!) investment

A message from Opportunities for Youth Campaign Chair Gene Davis

Imagine the Greater Wausau Area today without having had the Boys & Girls Club operations in both Wausau and Weston during the past ten years! Imagine that the 1800+ youth members that we have this year had to be looking for something else to do with the thousands of hours that they are spending at “the Club,” getting help with their schoolwork, learning to express their interests in art or technology, developing their leadership skills working with younger members, or simply being with a staff member who really cares about them and shows them the love and respect that they may otherwise not receive.

As a community, we are so much better off because of our Boys & Girls Club operations; and it is you, our supporters, with your wonderful generosity, who have made it possible.

During our Opportunities for Youth Campaign year (September 2007 – August 2008), nearly 450 donors invested over \$210,000 in the lives of our 1,800+ youth members and 8,500+ other youth served. With increased support from the community, we believe that we could, and would, serve as many as 1,000 additional young people in the Weston and Wausau areas. This past year, we received support from more than 100 first-time donors. All of our donors – first-time as well as tenth-time – can help by telling a friend about the Boys & Girls Club, and why you feel that it is a worthwhile investment of your important charitable dollars.

The goal for our current Opportunities for Youth Campaign (September 2008 – August 2009) is \$230,000. To meet the existing demand will require this amount of community



support. Raising more will allow us to serve more kids. Please join me by continuing to help the young people of our community with both your emotional and financial support of the Boys & Girls Club. We will be fulfilling the dreams of our early supporters like Caroline Mark and Stan Staples; and will be creating dreams in the minds of the 1,800+ young members that we are serving today. Thank you so much!

—Gene Davis

Helping lay the foundation: Community Foundation supports Club from the beginning

It would be difficult to overstate the total impact that the ongoing support from the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin has had on the Boys & Girls Club. The array of support for all aspects of programs and operations is inspiring and provides a great example of how well-executed philanthropy can help transform a non-profit from a modest startup into a significant community partner.

Back in the late 1990s, the Community Foundation provided the Club with both program and capital funding. They helped launch the early music program, which has now become one of our most popular programs. The Foundation also helped the Club acquire a 15 passenger van, which, ten years later is still running and has transported thousands of kids to the Club, to service projects, and to companies and colleges for career and educational exploration.

Well before the Club had fully established itself, the Foundation demonstrated vision and leadership by contributing \$250,000 to our first capital campaign, making it one of the top three donors to the Caroline S. Mark building project. When construction began, the Foundation assisted with donation tracking and

cash disbursements. Later it was chosen to manage the Club’s endowment.

Throughout the Club’s growth and maturation, the support for our key initiatives such as *Learn, Lead, Succeed* and *Healthy Teens* has continued. Jean Tehan, Executive Director for the Community Foundation explains, “The Community Foundation has supported programs of the Boys & Girls Club because they have creatively addressed community challenges in a cost effective, well thought out way, and have good people in place to implement their plans. Their board of directors provides sound oversight, and establishes leadership and direction for the Club’s activities.”

Boys & Girls Club Board President Tom Nohelty says that “the Community Foundation has helped the Club in every way imaginable and

the best way to show our appreciation is to continue to deliver on our mission in Wausau and throughout our area. The Club has grown tremendously – from less than 200 to over 1,800 members – since the Foundation started investing in our organization and with their continued support, as well as others throughout the community, we will serve thousands more kids with life-changing impacts.” ■



The popular and busy art room is another program funded by the Community Foundation.

Power Hour: making minutes count

Our members will tell you that finishing homework with a brother constantly poking you is a challenge. Not having access to a computer can make the difference between finishing homework and not turning it in. Trying to finish a collage for English class is tough without art supplies. At home, many kids face distractions, can't find a quiet place, or don't have the resources they need to complete their schoolwork. Power Hour at the Boys & Girls Club helps eliminate these problems.



Staff Jamie Boodle says Club members will bring in their report cards to show her the progress they've made.

Each day during

Power Hour, the computer lab at both our sites is open only to kids completing their homework. When members attend Power Hour, they have staff and other members encouraging and helping them. They have access to resources like computers, printers, art supplies, and tutors, and get recognition that motivates them to keep working.

The most crucial benefits of Power Hour are that kids get their homework done and have access to help if they need it. According to our 2007 survey, nearly two-thirds of members feel like the Club helps them do better in school and 40% of members use a computer to do school work at the Club. In 2007, 399 kids participated in Power Hour between both our Wausau and Weston sites doing their homework over 3,100 times.

Learn, Lead, Succeed Coordinator Jamie Boodle says her favorite part of Power Hour is when kids bring in their report cards to show her that doing their homework has resulted in better grades. "Just yesterday, a member pulled me aside to show me that doing his math homework in Power Hour raised his math grade to 'advanced' and now his Grandma will be so proud of him!"

As an added incentive, members receive Power Hour points for every 15 minutes that they do homework. These points are displayed on a giant wall chart and accumulate throughout the year. At the end of the year, the kids can redeem their points for chances to win prizes. However, for most kids it isn't about the prizes at the end – some kids don't even redeem their points. The chance to be recognized by the staff and other members is what makes it worth it.

The incentive program makes kids focus on long-term goal setting based on a fun premise. Kids know what prizes they would like, how many points they'll need for a chance to win them, and

then map out their strategy for doing it. The goal setting skills then translate into other areas of their lives, including school and home.

The addition of this incentive has resulted in the program becoming highly competitive among members. Tyler, a ninth grade member at the Greenheck site takes it so seriously, he's developed his own Excel spreadsheet to track the number of points he receives each day.

Recently, the Club was unable to use the computer lab at the Greenheck Field House and Tyler was devastated, saying to the staff, "How am I supposed to get my paper done by tomorrow and get my Power Hour points today?"

Power Hour is part of the Club's Learn, Lead, Succeed initiative, which gives members access to homework help, computer skills, job and career exploration, college preparation, and community service. ■



Club members at Power Hour have access to the computers, printers, supplies and tutors for homework help.

Casey's parents had to find something for their son to do, because sitting around the house playing video games wasn't a good option. But they needed to make sure Casey would be looked after and kept safe. They chose the Boys & Girls Club as the one place Casey could go besides home because of their faith in the staff.

Even before Casey returned to the Club, rumors were spreading about his broken head. The kids and the staff needed to understand what had happened in order to keep Casey safe. Over the course of the summer, the amount of time Casey could spend at the Club was limited, but gradually increased from one or two hours to an entire afternoon. At first he wandered around, not sure what to do or where to go, even making up stories just to be in the gym. After finding art projects Casey had created about broken hearts and broken heads, the staff recognized that he needed to be introduced to some new activities.

The Club's music program seemed like a good place to start. Casey's eyes widened when he heard he could be part of the BGC Rockers and play in a band. Casey's family thought the idea was great and even sent him to the Club with a guitar in need of some TLC. Casey worked with Rob Piehl, Music & Social Recreation Coordinator, to take apart and rebuild the guitar. And then he learned to play. Casey spends time each week working on chords and talking with Rob about his day, the week, his broken head and heart, whatever he needs. His guitar and the lessons he receives give him time to talk and learn a new skill that excites him and gives him something that is his. Rob says, "He has that contagious smile that reminds you that he is a little boy, even though he is dealing with something very adult. It's a little mischievous, too."

Casey knows the gym and skate park are off limits, but that "really cool" games room, where he now knows how to play all the games, has unlimited possibilities. Casey brought in his own pool cue and challenges Rob and other members every chance he gets – and he usually wins. Between music, games, art and the new relationships with staff and members he has, it is safe to say that Casey has found more to do at the Club than skate, even though it's not quite the same.

Although he's only in the sixth grade, Casey is already dreaming about what to do in the future. And even though he can't skate himself, skateboarding is still on the top of his mind. He thinks he may want to be a carpenter, "So I can build ramps for my brothers and they can skate them." Or, he may want to be a helmet or indoor skate park designer. Regardless of what he wants to be, everyone at the Club keeps encouraging him to dream big. ■



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF THE WAUSAU AREA**

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