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Thursday, March 29, 2012

Vol. 20, No. 13 • 32 pages/4 sections

Southern Rhode Island Newspapers

Chariho Middle Schoolers kick some butts

Local students join state leaders to raise tobacco awareness

By ANTHONY aRUSSO

PROVIDENCE - A group of Chariho Middle School students are trying hard to do their part to make a positive impact in their school and their community, and on Wednesday, March 21, they took a trip to the state house to kick some butts.

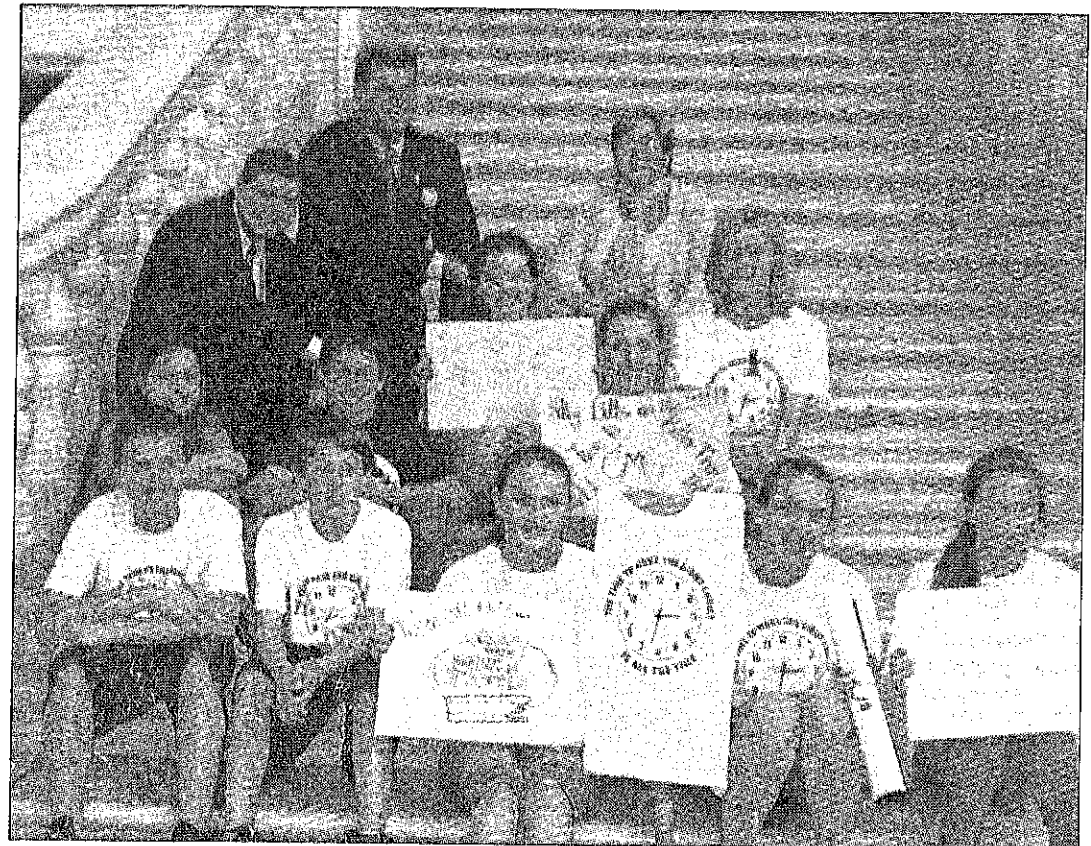
During what was dubbed by State Rep. Larry Valencia (D-39 Charlestown, Exeter, Richmond) as the official National Kick Butts Day, the 13 students, split into two groups, presented two videos on youth tobacco awareness. The two Chariho groups finished the event in 1st and 2nd places.

Chariho Task Force Middle School Councilor Terri Censabella, who helped get the students involved in the event, said that the purpose of Kick Butts Day was to spread aware-

ness about the harmful and undesirable effects of smoking. She said that tobacco companies spend approximately \$10 million per year in marketing, and use techniques to make their products more attractive to young consumers, in hopes that they will get hooked and replace those who have died from smoking.

"What we find with tobacco, and even alcohol and marijuana, is that the earlier they start, the higher the chance is for them to have a problem later on," said Censabella. "The longer they delay to even try it, the better off they are."

She also pointed out two additional reasons why the task force wants to continue to educate students on these tobacco marketing practices, the first being the fact that it is illegal for minors to purchase tobacco, and the second being that smoking



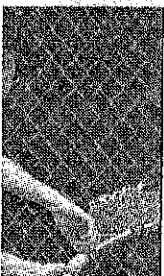
Chariho Times

WS



talks tuition, -A

SPORTS



LAW & ORDER

CMS students take home awards for videos on tobacco awareness

CMS, from page one

because their bodies are still developing.

The Rhode Island Tobacco Control Network (TCN) sponsored the event, and disseminated the information to middle school principals across the state. Middle school groups were to submit 30-second long public service announcements, either audio or video, warning teens of smoking dangers and tobacco marketing.

Chariho Middle School had too many students that wanted to be involved, so they split into groups and made two videos instead. The students involved were members of Natural Leaders and Students Against

Destructive Decisions (SADD), two peer programs at the school.

The first video was called "The Time is Right," and had a total of nine students in it. It started with two girls talking at a locker in between classes. Two boys then approach the girls and the students talk about eating candy before their next class. One of the boys pulls out a tobacco product in a tin similar to a candy container. The other students tell him that it is tobacco, the dangers it can present, and why tobacco companies market that product to teens.

The product was a smokeless form of tobacco called Snus. It comes in a small tin, similar to dip, and is small tea-bag like pouches of tobacco that can

be placed inside the lip. The product comes in different flavors, and unlike dip, does not require spitting.

The second video was titled "Better than That," and starts off with two students smoking outside of school. A third student walks up and tells them that smoking can be harmful to your health and appearance, and that there are better things to do with your time.

The video then cuts to a girl who announces some information about the targeting of children in tobacco marketing.

The videos feature students wearing shirts that say "The time to make the right time is all the time." The shirts were produced by the peer programs.

The students who went to the state house were Miriam Overend, Grace Vargo-Willeford, Jamie Dobson, Carly Campbell, Bianca Briggs, Katie Caparco, Ben Hubertus and Nathan Morin. Students who couldn't attend but were involved in the videos were Lillian Kingsbury, Samantha Johnson, Alexia Felicetti, Liz Vasquez and Brooke Preuhs.

The students were invited to share their videos at the state house last Wednesday, and were greeted by Reps. Valencia, Donna Walsh (D-36, Charlestown, New Shoreham, South Kingstown, Westerly) and Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-38, Hopkinton, Westerly). That is when Valencia made the procla-

mation that from here on out the 21s of March will be Kick Butts Day.

The students were given some chilling statistics on smoking while at the state house. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, and 1,700 people die from it each year in Rhode Island alone. Every day more than 3,800 teens have their first cigarette, and over 1,400 teens who use tobacco at a young age, become daily smokers, half of which will die from smoking related illnesses.

Valencia has introduced legislation to the House of Representatives to applaud and congratulate the students, while also recognizing March 21, 2012 as National Kick Butts Day.

Chariho Relay for Life 5K road race takes place this Sunday

RACE, from page one

Interactive Learning Exciting. She said that she created the project to help make student more motivated for reading.

"I wanted to also provide the students with opportunities to learn about health and making healthy choices," Lyons said.

So with that in mind, and her affiliation with the Westerly Relay for Life, the Chariho 5K was born just one year after the SMILE Project.

The race gives students the opportunity to gain community service hours as well. They help set up tents, explain the course to the runners and provide water for them. Lyons said that she has also worked on other service learning projects similar to this with her students.

The race has grown since its inception, and now is much more like a professional road race than it once was. The event is now complete with a certified course, an official timer, sponsors, concessions and even a D.J.

"We started it with popsicle stick," Lyons said, "and now we're on to bigger things."

The Absolut M&M team is an annual member of the westerly Relay for Life, and was started by an Ashaway family who lost a member to cancer. The team now consists of two brother, two sisters, and other relatives and close friends.

Lyons said the event has a lot of community support and sponsorship. Many families provide donations each year, including an anonymous donor who Lyons said give a sizable contribution annually. Also, Dunkin Donuts will be providing food for the event.

The course is rich in Chariho character. It will start near the high school baseball field then take a left on Switch Road. The course will then make a loop via Pine Hill and Dawn Lanes. Once back on switch road, the course will take the runners past campus, into the middle school entrance near the Career and Tech. Center, and will end with one loop around the track.

Lyons said that the course is flat and friendly to most runners.

The first 150 entrees will receive a race tee shirt. The race will be held rain or shine.

According to Lyons, the donations will pay for the cost of the race, and 100 percent of the proceeds will go directly to the American Cancer Society.


Local FIREFIGHTER take home multiple

FIREFIGHTER, from page one

tion, and the Robert Stanley Volunteer of the Year Award is named after his brother, who was a member.

Stanley said that there is a specific format

Andrew Briody	-	Arthur Stanley	Auxiliary Members, and Chief Fred Sherman, Hope Valley Ambulance Squad
Patrick Webber	-	Robert Stanley	Dedicated to the Community Award
Michael Tanzi	-	Stanley Napper	Patrick Hawkins, Graham Devine
Dedicated service Award			Special Service Award
			Philin Tretton Keith Williams, Emma



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